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**Modularisation at UCD:
An exploration of governance in higher
education**

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While the world economy operates largely uncoupled from any political frame, national governments are restricted to fostering the modernization of their national economies. As a consequence, they have to adapt national welfare systems to what is called the capacity for international competition (Habermas, 1996: 292).

....power as domination is the ability to constrain the choice of others, coercing them or securing their compliance, by impeding them from living as their own nature and judgment dictate (Lukes, 2005:85).

ABSTRACT

Rizvi and Lingard (2010) suggest that there have been shifts in the development and institutional implementation of education policies, as the values promoted by national systems of education are not just established by the policy actors within the nation state but forged through transnational and global entities. In current studies, there are a number of reductionist accounts of global effects on education policy which do not take account of historical context. Drawing on the policy sociology literature, this thesis empirically investigates the policy process at University College Dublin when it modularised its undergraduate and postgraduate programmes. It reviews how supranational processes (including European integration and the work of the OECD) and policy making affected UCD's institutional dynamics and policy production during this process. In documenting and analysing the production of this institutional education policy, evidence suggests that policy is shaped predominantly by local policy actors and global influences situated outside of the nation-state. To explore the influence of macro factors on this policy process, UCD provides an outward-focused case study into this policy process at a micro level. Insight into this process is evidenced by collecting data through textual analysis of policy documents and semi-structured interviewing of 23 key policy actors at UCD and other influential policy agencies.

To investigate the 'black box' by which power is exerted in this policy process, Bourdieu's theoretical tools are utilised. Bourdieu's 'conceptual triad' is pervasive in the education policy literature, clarifying why some of these policy practices remain national and localised within the global policy field. The study evidences the effects of globalisation manifest in UCD's modular policy which responded to both internally generated reform and agencies external to the state. The pursuit and implementation of this policy demonstrates the capacity of non-national political structures, e.g. the EUA, OECD, and Bologna Process, to shape not only national policy (Henry et al., 2001) but also institutional governance and policy. The manifestation of these structures also provide confirmation of governance without government (Rosenau, 1992). This study sustains the suggestion of a global policy field (Lingard, et al., 2005) and demonstrates a resultant reconstitution of the local education policy field.

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To Mum who believed I could.

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ABBREVIATIONS

Acronym	Organisation
AACSB	Association of Advance Collegiate Schools of Business
ACEC	Academic Council Executive Committee
AMBA	Association of Master of Business Administrations
BFUG	Bologna Follow-up Group
CBL	College of Business and Law, UCD
CHEA	Council for Higher Education Accreditation, UK
CHIU	Conferences of Heads of Irish Universities
CONAHEC	Consortium for North American Higher Education Collaboration
CQFW	Credits and Qualifications Framework for Wales

Acronym	Organisation
DCU	Dublin City University
DES	Department of Education & Science (Government of Ireland)
EC	European Commission
ECB	European Central Bank
ECTS	European Credit Transfer System
EU	European Union
EHEA	European Area of Higher Education
ENIC	European Network of Information Centres
EUA	European Universities Association
ENQA	European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education
EQUIS	European Quality Improvement System in Management and Business Administration

Acronym	Organisation
EURASHE	European Association of Institutions in Higher Education
ESIB	European Student Information Bureau (now called The National Union of Student in Europe/European Students Union)
HEA	Higher Education Authority (Ireland)
HEIs	Higher Education Institutions (General Term)
IFUT	Irish Federation of University Teachers
IMHE	Institutional Management in Higher Education (OECD)
IMS	Initiative on Modularisation and Semesterisation at UCD
IHEQN	Irish Higher Education Quality Network
IUA	Irish Universities Association
IUQB	Irish Universities Quality Board

Acronym	Organisation
NUI	National University of Ireland
NARIC	National Academic Recognition Information Centres
NICATS	Northern Ireland Credit Accumulation and Transfer System
NQF	National Qualifications Framework (Ireland)
NQAI	National Qualification Authority of Ireland
NUCCAT	Northern Universities consortium on Credit Accumulation and Transfer, UK
SEEC	South East Consortium, for Credit Accumulation and Transfer, UK
SIF	Strategic Innovation Fund
SMT	Senior Management Team (UCD)
OECD	Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development
TUI	Teachers Union of Ireland

Acronym	Organisation
UCD	University College Dublin
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation
UNESCO (CEPES)	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (Centre Européen pour l’enseignement supérieur – European Centre for Higher Education)
UMPC	University Modular Programme Committee, UCD
USI	Union of Students of Ireland
UUPB	University Undergraduate Programme Board, UCD
UGPB	University Graduate Programme Board, UCD

CHAPTER ONE – INTRODUCTION

1.0 Introduction

In his augural speech in 2004, University College Dublin's (UCD) President outlined a plan for UCD, premised on the institution's internationalisation. He outlined the need for UCD to become one of the top universities in Europe and a university where 'international competition is the benchmark for everything ...' (UCD, 2005a:4). In keeping with this objective, UCD's plans to modularise its curriculum were officially announced in its Strategic Plan (2005-8). The rationale for modularisation was underpinned by a number of external reviews, including those from the European University Association and Washington Advisory Group. These reviews occurred at the time of an OECD national review of higher education which heavily encouraged the internationalisation of universities. Concurrently, the Bologna Declaration commenced in 1999 and also influenced UCD's policy trajectory. In documenting and analysing the production of institutional education policy, the literature suggests that policy is not only shaped by developments at local or national level but also by global influences situated outside of the nation-state.

UCD's reforms occurred in an environment of wider sectoral development. Other Irish and European universities face reform in response to the claim

that universities were not willing or capable of responding to the global 'knowledge economy' (Olsen and Maassen, 2007). Suggested reforms for universities include a new organisational structure and the alteration of the internal and external relations of university power and governance. This study focuses upon UCD's introduction of modularisation, to understand such policy developments institutionally and nationally. For this study, modularisation provided a tangible policy outcome to review how supranational agencies arbitrate national policy entities and individual institutions.

Modularisation, originally emanating from the USA, was one policy initiative which was recently encouraged in Ireland (EUA, 2005; Minister for Education and Science, 2005). While modularisation is generally new to Irish higher education, there were two 'distinct waves of interest' in modularity in the UK, in the 1960's (which largely focused on the reduction of disciplinary boundaries) and again in the 1980's and 1990's (which was associated with flexibility, access and semesterisation) (Trowler, 1998a). Modularisation is defined as:

...the process by which educational awards are broken up into component parts of a more or less standard size. These parts may then be assessed separately and independently, so that students can study individual modules in a variety of different sequences (Morris, 2000:240).

Improving educational flexibility has been acknowledged as an effective strategy to broaden access to higher education (Johnston, 1999; Trowler, 1998b). Early observers of a modular approach expected its greatest benefit lay in its ability to provide flexibility to learners. As a policy, it has the capacity to broaden access and facilitate part-time and student-paced study

(Thorne, 1991; Van Meel, 1997). Modularisation was proposed to allow a student to amass 'credit' for courses successfully completed which suited their personal circumstances, and also allow a student to assemble credits taken at different institutions (Bridges, 2000:42). Modularisation was also suggested to encourage increased student choice and influence over the content of the curriculum and their degree programmes (Brennan and Taylor, 1996). It was said to facilitate easier development of new degree programmes through additional modules and the re-ordering of existing elements into new programmes (Jackson, 1996).

Other observers (Brecher, 2005; Hartley, 1995; Henkel, 2000) were more critical of modularisation and have suggested that it can be a means of standardisation that facilitates ease of assembly and replacement linked with a neo-liberal manifesto. Modularisation was also described as self-contained modules, 'constituting a cafeteria-style menu rather than a balanced and properly varied and contrasting diet' (Brecher, 2005: 73) Arising from an instrumental conception of knowledge, modularisation allows knowledge to be presented and understood as a commodity (Brecher, 2005). From an organisational perspective, Henkel (2000) observed that modularisation was a sign of power transfer from academics and their departments to the institution. Often, it was imposed by the senior management teams in respective universities for political and administrative reasons (Henkel, 2000).

Debates about programme modularisation as a policy occur at a time of general observations about the increasingly dynamic nature of institutional and national education policy processes. Rizvi and Lingard (2010) suggested major shifts in the development, institutional implementation and evaluation

of education policies, as the values promoted by national systems of education are not just established by the policy actors within the particular nation state but forged through transnational and global entities. They did not elaborate on how these entities engage in this process or its effect. This study attempts to avoid the reification of globalisation in education policy studies, as the explanation for current developments in education policy (Rizvi and Lingard, 2010; Dale, 1999) and identifies individual and organisational sources of emergent policy discourses of a global dimension. Reification is understood as the temptation to clarify shifts in policy as a causal product of global process (Rizvi and Lingard, 2010:44).

This study is sociological by nature and draws upon a number of sociological tools. While sociological insights cannot prescribe a detailed direction, they assist understanding of the confines and potential of education policy in modern societies by providing lenses to explore the assumptions of contemporary educational policy (Whitty, 1997). To explore this topic, tools are occasionally introduced from the political science discipline, e.g. policy networks. This study contributes to the field of inquiry called ‘policy sociology’ which is ‘rooted in the social science tradition, historically informed and draws on qualitative and illuminative techniques’ (Ozga, 1987:144). It applies sociological analysis to the processes of formulating and implementing policy and the relationship between them (Trowler, 1998b). Policy sociology has not focused particularly on the role of individuals but strives to ‘bring together’ macro-level, structural analysis of systems of education and education policies and micro level investigation which includes peoples’ experiences and perceptions (Ozga, 1990:359). In policy sociology studies, there are a number of reductionist accounts of global

effects on education policy which do not take account of historical context (e.g. Rizvi and Lingard, 2010; Rizvi, 2006). To address this, the study is situated within the Irish higher education policy context. (See Chapter 2). Many current theoretical discussions (e.g. Rizvi and Lingard, 2010) do not draw on a convincing empirical basis. This study is grounded by its research design and collected data.

1.1 Research Rationale

1.1.1 Research Opportunity arising from literature

Chapter 3 outlines the literature in which this study is located. The concept of globalisation and its effects on the nation state are explored. Some have suggested that higher education policy was primarily shaped by the state in the first instance (Enders, 2004). Others suggested evidence of the construction of a global education agenda (King, 2007; Dale, 2009; Lawn and Lingard, 2002), which reconfigured the state's authority. In light of a European/global dimension to the policy cycle, the political structures operating beyond the nation state, namely the OECD and EU, are increasingly acknowledged and highlight the presence of a global education policy field. This concept of a 'global education policy field' was developed from Bourdieu's (2003) concept of a global economic field (Lingard *et al.*, 2005; Rawolle and Lingard, 2008: 736). (Please see Section 3.3.2). The suggestion of convergence was offset by a divergence thesis which argued that substantive policy differences are visible. Neither the convergence or divergence thesis provides sufficient insight, suggesting evidence of a vernacular globalisation of education policy outcomes, drawing on Appadurai's concepts (1996). The mechanisms by which globalisation affects

national policy are then explored, using Dale's typology (1999). While this literature is useful, often it is explored without historical context and neglects the reality for institutions of policy transfer arising from European integration. Such context is critical to exploring the impact of a process of globalisation on the state and its institutions.

Power is central to understanding the policy process. The different manifestations of power are explored, including Lukes' three dimensions of power (2005). To investigate the 'black box' by which power is exerted, Bourdieu's theoretical tools are introduced. Bourdieu's 'conceptual triad' was pervasive in the education policy literature, clarifying why some of the practices of educational actors and their resultant policies remain national and localised within the global policy field. This 'conceptual triad' includes the thinking tools of practice, habitus and social fields (Rawolle and Lingard, 2008:730). Those processes associated with globalisation carry methodological research implications which Bourdieu's concepts explain, e.g. the concept of social field is a physical metaphor applicable to global relations (Rawolle and Lingard, 2008). In the empirical research, methodological and conceptual developments are required to comprehend the global comparisons between nations and the emergence of a proportionate global space of educational capacity which affect national education policy fields. Concepts related to governance including pluralism, associative democracy and civil society are also explored, to explain power within the policy process. Particularly, the term 'governance' signifies a new mode of government based upon state and non-state cooperation engaging in networks. This term has another meaning, i.e. a different mode of coordinating individual actions or basic forms of social order (Enders, 2004:370-2). Both meanings of governance are utilised here.

The concept of policy networks is central to understanding power diffusion. While policy networks provide a framework to understand a phenomenon like the Bologna Process, the role of the agents (either individuals or organisational) in the policy networks is not clearly addressed. Exploring how policy networks influence policy formulation and the role of agents within or outside of an individual university is not explained by current theoretical insights, e.g. Rizvi and Lingard (2010). Lastly, the role of international organisations in governance is explored. The emergence of soft governance tools, e.g. the Open Method of Coordination, exemplifies the shift from 'government to governance'. To explore this shift, educational multilateralism is discussed from neo-institutionalist and cultural imperialist perspectives. European integration has challenged these tools, which fail to capture the macro and micro level relationships of governance. Current debates regarding the Bologna Process and its impact on governance for nations and higher education institutions are also explored. While the Bologna Process is well recorded, little theorising is offered regarding how it is embedded institutionally. Accounts of the effects of globalisation or regionalisation tend to neglect the 'pays réel' (Neave, 2005) of macro level policy and overlook the 'willful power' (Ritzer and Goodman, 2003:534) individuals exert locally, in spite of the global educational policy field.

1.2 Research Question

The reviewed literature and insight into UCD led to this question:

How do supranational processes (including European integration and the work of the OECD) and policy making affect UCD's institutional dynamics and policy production?

Four sub-questions were also identified:

1. Analyse UCD's modularisation policy and its relationship to national and supranational education discourses.
2. Determine what, if any, are the policy effects on the changing relationships between the state and universities.
3. Verify the extent of state engagement in supranational cooperation, inter-organisational agencies, and/or networks and how does it affect higher education governance nationally and locally.
4. Establish what policy mechanisms were evident in UCD's modularisation of programmes (as outlined by Dale, 1999).

1.3 Research Site

Taylor (1997) suggested that for policy analysis to be politically and strategically useful, analysis should be located within a context which accounts for micro or macro levels. Taylor recommended that rather than retaining a micro/macro dichotomy, the linkages between the different levels of the policy process with an emphasis on power relations must be explored. UCD provides an outward-focused insight into the policy process from a micro level. UCD is collectively reviewed within its national, regional and global contexts. As this study is an empirical inquiry investigating a phenomenon within its real-life context, a single case, case study was selected for the research design. UCD was selected as the primary site for its exploratory value. To investigate UCD's policy process, participants were

selected who provided insight into UCD's national, regional and global contexts and relationships.

UCD is the employer of this doctoral student. Working at UCD before, during and after its programme of modularisation provided the researcher with unique access. (See Section 4.6.1). Since 2004, UCD reorganised its internal structures, modularised its programmes and increased its research income, exemplifying the agenda to restructure Irish higher education (Barrett, 2006; Clancy, 2007b). UCD's history, its size as the largest Irish university and its influence on Irish higher education informed its selection as a site to study the policy process between an institution, the nation and supranational agencies. (See Chapter 2). UCD's development and its association with the construction of the Irish state makes it of interest in investigating global policy affects.

1.4 Research Methodology

Chapter 4 provides an outline of the methodological design utilised. Generally, policy studies are methodologically unsophisticated with language and meaning not fully explained (Maguire and Ball, 1994). Chapter 4 seeks to redress this, providing a theoretically informed approach to data collection and research design. First, it acknowledges the ontology and epistemology underpinning this thesis. This study sought to draw upon both observable, generalisable and predictable data (i.e. associated with the positivist tradition) and also the social construction of reality and the provision of explanations of intentionality of human behaviour emphasised by the interpretivist approach. As a result, it was underpinned by critical realism. The study was also phenomenological in approach, as those were

interviewed who had experienced the implementation of modularisation and the policy process surrounding this. The researcher recorded these dialogues to obtain their experiential descriptions of this policy process. The transcripts of these dialogues and key policy documents were analysed to highlight key descriptive phrases and words which add to understanding the policy process. Data from the policy documents complemented the 'conversations' with research participants about their experience of the policy process and provided an insight into the lived experience of the interviewees. The approach was also influenced by hermeneutics which facilitates the analysis of texts from the perspective of the author(/s), while emphasising the social and historical context within which it was produced (Bryman, 2001: 382-3).

The rationale for the selection of an exploratory case study is discussed in Section 4.3. An overview of the research site is provided in Section 4.3.1 and builds upon the policy context discussed in Chapter 2. The methodology of the study and its tools, particularly the textual analysis of documents and interviewing are then outlined. The chapter proceeds to discuss the collection of data and outlines the mechanisms used to select interviewees. Content and critical discourse analysis were employed to analyse collected data. Finally, the management of ethics during the project and particularly, the positionality of the researcher, as an employee of UCD and a doctoral student, are explored. This was important to acknowledge as being an employee heightened insight of the UCD and national policy processes and structures.

1.5 Overview of Chapters

Chapter Two describes the policy context of Irish higher education, including UCD. **Chapter Three** outlines the academic literature in which this study is located. The concept of globalisation and its effects on the nation state is explored. Key concepts to the discussion of education policy are explored including power, governance, policy networks and the European dimension of policy formulation. **Chapter Four** explains how the author approached the research of this study, while acknowledging there is no single approach for carrying out education policy analysis (Ozga, 2000). It outlines the research design of the study, including the methods of data collection and analysis. **Chapter Five** presents the key thematic abstractions developed during its analysis and representative extracts from the data collected. Essentially, there are three components to this chapter: what was the 'UCD Horizons' programme; where did it come from; and how it did get to UCD. **Chapter Six** discusses the study's findings within the literature reviewed in Chapter Four. The discussion explores the relations within and between the findings and current academic debates. **Chapter Seven** recapitulates this study's findings and explores its contribution to existing knowledge theoretically, methodologically and empirically.

CHAPTER TWO: POLICY CONTEXT

2.0. Introduction

Critical policy analysis acknowledges the significance of the broader historical context in which a policy is articulated (Rizvi and Lingard, 2010). It is essential to relate the policy process to the structure of power within a society as policy is the result of the exercise of power and political influence, determining what the state does. It determines what organisations adopt and implement as policy. A history of the Republic of Ireland's provides a background to the nation's policy developments. An overview is provided of education policy in Ireland, including the Universities Act 1997 and the 2004 OECD Review of Higher Education. Finally an overview of UCD, as the primary research site, and its policy context is provided.

2.1. The Republic of Ireland

In looking at the historical aspect of power in Ireland, due to its size, power and location, its relationship with Europe warrants Ireland's description as a small, open polity (Keatinge and Laffan, 1996; Laffan, 1996). Given Ireland's history, a colonised legacy is expected (Moane, 2002). Ireland's welfare state could be identified as a moveable feast, using Esping Andersen's typology, with hallmarks of Anglo Saxon welfare until the mid 1970's and the southern family until the mid-1990's (O'Sullivan, 2004).

The Republic of Ireland dates back to 1937. Efforts to establish Irish Home Rule were unsuccessful, including the 1916 Easter Rising. In 1919, a War of Independence began, lasting until 1921 with the establishment of the Irish Free State (Moane, 2002). The Government of Ireland Act 1920 enacted a partition between two parts of Ireland, with one parliament in Belfast and one in Dublin. In 1921 the Anglo-Irish Treaty ratified this, giving birth to the Irish Free State of 26 counties. Six counties remained under British rule, collectively called 'Northern Ireland'. As the Free State emerged, influences from the past were constitutionally, administratively and politically evident (Coolahan, 2003). In 1937, a new constitution, Bunreacht na hEireann, was enacted, defining Ireland as a sovereign independent democratic state.

From the early 1990's until 2001, Ireland had unprecedented economic growth (Coolahan, 2003). This era of economic growth is referred to as the period of the 'Celtic Tiger'. Key growth areas, in pharmaceuticals, information and communication technology and financial services, were sustained due to the high quality and quantity of the graduate workforce available. Ireland's economic success was portrayed as self-achievement, rather than an expression of the highly reliant position of late industrialising nations on the investment politics of global companies (Kirby, 2002). The rate of unemployment began to rise again from mid-2007 due to an economic downturn. The unemployment rate in late 2009 was 12.5% (Central Statistics Office, 2009:1).

Many think Ireland is more pluralist due to a more liberal modern society and diverse demography but a century ago, there were competing ideas of what Irish society was about, including the Gaelic revival, the movement for

women's rights, unionism and parliamentary nationalism (Kirby, 2002). Recent history has moved away from an Anglocentric or Anglophobic version of Irish history and redefined Irish history in a number of ways (Kirby, 2002). Kirby suggested that contemporary Irish identity was sanitised, accommodating the strong exclusive task of docile absorption into multinational capitalism. This robbed reference points from a rich and subversive history, as associated by Jacobsen with 'a high degree of deference' (Gellner cited by Kirby, 2002:27). Kirby suggests that the 'No' vote in the 2001 Nice Treaty was a rare exception to this. The rejection of the Lisbon Treaty in 2008 was a second exception.

2.2 Education and the Republic of Ireland

The OECD (2006:128) suggested that education is expected to serve the needs of a society and pressures have appeared to improve the alliance between society and the education sector. However, there are different perspectives on the association between society and education (Ashton and Green, 1996; Wolf, 2002). Some argue that the development between education and improved societal well-being are misleading and intervention and market forces in education cannot address income inequality (Wolf, 2002).

Historically, the Irish education system's most distinguishing feature is the Church's involvement. Its role was different than in other European States early in the twentieth century, as they were losing power to public initiative. The Irish educational system by the turn of the last century gave power politically, economic relief and a level of ideological satisfaction (O'Buchalla, 1985). The system was controlled by the churches but primarily state funded. When the Irish Free State was established, the new state institutionalised the

denominational school system. The pattern of power arising from the structures for the provision and management of education controversies of the 1800's became a feature in the outcome of policy in the 1900's. This dominance experienced some changes from the 1940's but generally all except for churches were excluded from policy-making (Whyte, 1980). The system's development was associated with the socioeconomic and industrial power structures and thereafter, those of parents and students. Recently, the declining influence of the Catholic Church is notable, particularly due to scandals related to child abuse (Quinn *et al.*, 2006; Inglis, 2006).

Since the 1960's the state has taken an increasingly interventionist role in education. Clancy (2005) suggested that two concerns manifested with education since the late 1990's. First, concern focused on current and future relationships between education and the labour market and education's contribution to economic development. Second, concern was directed at social justice, access equality and the needs of those disadvantaged. Clancy highlighted that both legitimated the expenditure in Irish education. O'Buchalla (1985) observed that the best description of the Irish educational system is an 'aided system' where the state assists other agencies through funding. At both primary and secondary level, the majority of the agencies receiving financial assistance are the churches or their related agencies. Clancy (2007b) proposed that since the 1960's, 'subsidiarity' better describes the relationship between the state and the education providers. This subsidiarity developed from a legacy of state aided, not state owned, education and is evidenced by the Department of Finance annual grants for universities. Clancy suggested that this signals that the state did not assume a role in the higher education policy planning.

2.3 Third Level Education

This section discusses the evolution of higher education and its recent participation trends. The state's involvement in higher education is also discussed. Appendix One illustrates the key agencies involved in Irish higher education.

2.3.1 Irish University Education

Ireland was late by European standards in the attainment of its first university (Coolahan, 2003). The oldest university in Ireland, University of Dublin (i.e. Trinity College), received its royal charter in 1592. Trinity was an Anglican educational institution in a principally Catholic country and served the Protestant professional and landowning classes (Anderson, 2004). The use of religious tests to enter this university meant that only members of the Established (Protestant) Church could attend university. This was detrimental to the rising Catholic middle class and the Presbyterian minority. A Catholic College at Maynooth in 1795 was the first opportunity at university level for Catholics but did not provide an opportunity for lay Catholics to study. In the nineteenth century, efforts were made to provide education at tertiary level for Catholics, including the establishment of three Queen's colleges in the late nineteenth century in Belfast, Cork and Galway. The hierarchy of the Catholic Church in Ireland forbade Catholics from attending these colleges and the colleges in Cork and Galway deteriorated (Anderson, 2004).

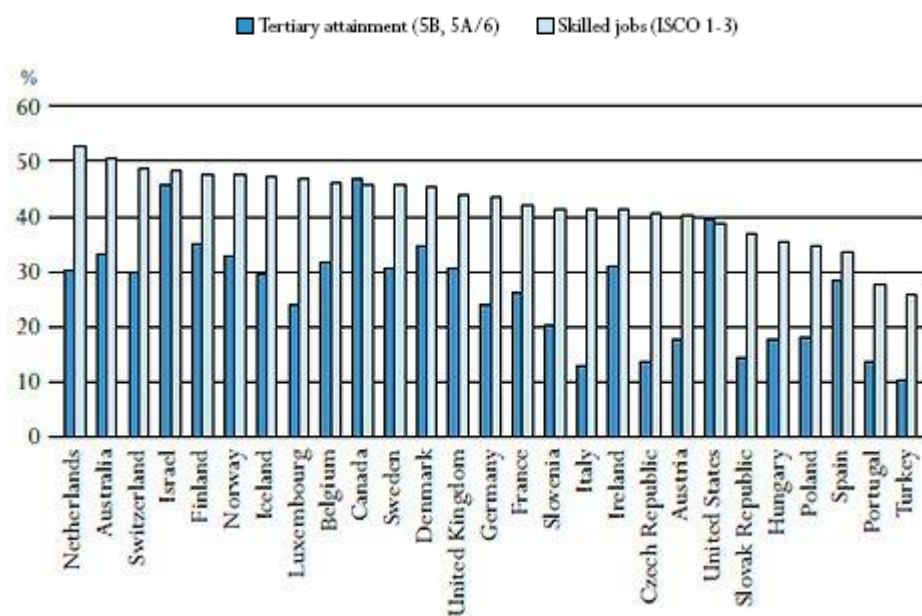
Ireland was unusual across Europe: the Catholic Church avoided any separation of the role of the state and the organisation of education. This created a stalemate as British opinion generally was against state funding of

any university of Catholic denomination, hoping that a common university education would create allegiance amongst the communities (Anderson, 2004). The first Catholic University was founded by John Henry Newman in 1854. Newman's involvement was brief and it evolved with other institutions to become UCD (See Section 2.5).

2.3.2 Third Level Education Participation

Increased participation rates in education were most noticeable in the tertiary education area and accompanied by a two-and-a-half-fold improvement in average living standards (OECD, 2006). Currently, 55% of the age cohort 18-22 is enrolled in full-time programmes. Over the thirty years from 1965 to 1995, the numbers of full-time students increased five-fold from 20,698 to 102,320 (OECD, 2006: 127). Of this number, 57% were attending the university sector by 1995 (OECD, 2006: 127). If the numbers of students going to the U.K. to higher education were included, the rate would be 60% (O'Connell, 2006 cited by Clancy 2007a:110). Between 1973 and 2003, third level enrolments increased five-fold (Clancy, 2007a:101). This was higher than the global average, though it is difficult to compare across countries because of the variations of higher education types and the age range of third level students (Clancy 2007a). Figure 2.1 demonstrates the proportion of 25-64 year old population with tertiary education across the OECD countries.

Figure 2.1 Proportion of population in skilled jobs and proportion of population with tertiary education (2006)



(OECD, 2008:28)

2.3.3 State Involvement in Higher Education

Politically, Irish universities have most influence on the political process through the upper house of the Irish Parliament, the Senate (Seanad). Under the constitution, six of its forty nine members are elected by the graduates of the National University of Ireland (NUI) and the University of Dublin (TCD). Three are elected from NUI and TCD respectively. The Department of Education and Science (DES) is responsible for the education portfolio. It was established in 1924 after the attainment of political independence. It is led by the Minister, two Ministers of State and the Secretary General. Much of the state's power is held by the DES, though some functions are assigned to specialist agencies, e.g. the Higher Education Authority (HEA). The HEA was launched in 1968 as:

... a key intermediary agency between the state and the universities, with important planning and budgetary responsibilities for the university sector (OECD, 2006: 127).

The executive control of the university sector was neglected until the mid-1990's. The HEA's remit was later extended to provide it with executive responsibility for this sector. It is the funding authority for the universities, institutes of technology and a number of designated higher education institutions. It is a statutory body which is primarily a planning, co-ordinating and financing agency. It currently has a budget of €1.6 billion (Holden, 2009).

The HEA advises, reviews and monitors higher education and is an executive body to assess the financial requirements of institutions (Curry, 2003). Under the Universities Act 1997, the HEA has the power to review universities' work and quality assurance procedures. The universities have autonomy of academic freedom and to confer their own awards. This Act requires the individual universities to organise quality reviews of the institutions activities using procedures laid out in Section 35. The Irish Universities Quality Board was established, in discussion with the HEA, to organise reviews of the effectiveness of these procedures. This responsibility was devolved by the universities to fulfill their obligations under Section 35(4). (See below).

In the 1980's, the government thought the HEA was becoming too much of an university advocate (Osborne, 1996). At this time of UK reform, there was a notable difference in the role of UK third level agencies compared to the absence of the HEA. On several occasions the government left places on the HEA vacant. In the early 1990's, a new Chair of the HEA was appointed (a

former DES Secretary) and this appointment instigated working groups and commissioned research. The changing agenda of higher education was presented by the HEA at the National Convention on Education 1993/4 in response to the reactions from the different institutions. Some saw the role of the HEA changing negatively and others saw it was becoming a cat's paw of the government (Osborne, 1996). While it enjoyed relative autonomy from the government early on, which helped it earn the trust of the client institutions, gradually the HEA/government lines became more permeable (Clancy, 1991). Examples of this included the state's increased budgetary role and the regain of some functions earlier delegated to the HEA (Clancy, 2007b). The incorporation of all colleges under the HEA's remit could be construed as growth in the sector's autonomy and countering the perceived contradiction of university autonomy. This trend towards self regulation, indicates the government was happy that the sector has achieved acceptable product control (Clancy, 2007b).

Locally, each university has a governing authority responsible for the preparation of strategic plans, producing annual reports, ensuring quality assurance and being accountable for budgets (OECD, 2006). The internal administrative arrangements make provision for academic councils and faculty structures. Each university has an elected president who holds office for a ten-year period. The seven university presidents meet as the IUA which promotes university education through collective policies, strategies and programmes.

As mentioned above, the Irish Universities Quality Board (IUQB) was established in 2002, in consultation with the HEA. The IUQB established

itself as a voice both nationally and internationally in the area of quality assurance and is financed by subscriptions from the seven Irish universities and an annual HEA grant. It conducts external reviews of the quality procedures in Irish universities and seeks to promote and publish best practice regarding quality assurance in accordance with the 1997 Universities Act and Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area.

Conversely, the Irish Higher Education Quality Network emanated from a National Conference on the Bologna Process, held by of the Department of Education and Science in 2003. The organisation originated from an agreement amongst key stakeholders that it would be helpful if those with an interest in quality assurance in Irish higher education were to discuss quality in a national context. It was agreed to strive towards the development of a common national position on quality assurance issues. Stakeholders represented include the Institutes of Technology, the DES, the Dublin Institute of Technology, the HEA, the Higher Education Colleges Association, HETAC, IUA, IUQB, NQAI, the Union of Students in Ireland and the Conference of Heads of Irish Colleges of Education. UCD is represented by the IUA at this forum.

2.3.4 University Financing

Ireland is ranked 17th out of 28 OCED countries regarding expenditure on educational institutions per student. It is ranked 16th out of 28 regarding expenditure on third-level education relative to per capita GDP (OECD, 2003). Ireland spent 1% of GDP of public expenditure on higher education as compared to the OECD average of 1.5% in 2008 (OECD, 2008: 230). There are

recurrent complex problems with capital in Irish universities. It is costly to maintain a strong university sector, as universities are labour intensive and use the services of highly-trained individuals. Governments around the world have difficulty in funding universities; the problem in Ireland is more acute as there was lower investment traditionally in higher education (Mitchell, 2003). Revenue was particularly affected in 1995 when the Government abolished full-time, undergraduate fees. This was popular but attracted criticism as grants had not improved to support students from disadvantaged backgrounds (Mitchell, 2003). There was also a rise in the student/staff ratios, to above the OECD average, which impeded active learning and student/scholar interaction (Mitchell, 2003).

2.4 Higher Education Policy

A number of developments shaping higher education policy in Ireland are now outlined. A timeline summarising these is included in Appendix Two. In the emergence of the 'knowledge economy', the government determined that Ireland would build on its educational strengths and reform, to adapt and modernise its education system. This idea of the knowledge economy relates to the concept that Europe and Ireland must compete in the global market. In order for this to happen, citizens need high-level skills. Technology is changing so quickly that these skills need updating and leading to lifelong learning and cyclical training (Brine, 2006). The EU's agenda for the knowledge economy was set out in the Lisbon Strategy, building upon prior discussions on employment strategy and lifelong learning.

The 1990's commenced a period of debate and policy development in education. The 1991 'OECD Review of National Policies for Education' served as a catalyst for this debate. The report's intention was to address issues of teacher supply and training but its observations instigated discussion including the DES's weak administrative and policy capacity; the relative absence of a central authority with political force; the intrinsic complexity of the system; financial resources to formulate and implement reforms and the survival of powerful interest groups outside of the government. Osborne (1996) highlighted that a number of the reforms arising in the Green Paper (later becoming the 1995 White Paper) were responses to the OECD's report and an attempt to initiate a strategic analysis for education policy.

In 1992, the government published a Green Paper which proposed changes for primary, post-primary and tertiary education. A National Education Convention was arranged in 1993, by an independent secretariat of academics and a range of key stakeholders. A report on this convention ensued in 1994 and fed into 'Charting Our Education Future in 1995'. This White Paper adopted key themes highlighted in the 1992 Green Paper. The National Convention on Education (1993 and 1994) discussed this report, including the modularisation of all courses and the establishment of a credit transfer framework (Osborne, 1996). This White Paper contained unexpected policy provisions, e.g. the policy on research funding and quality assurance demonstrated a considerable intervention by the state, against the universities' positions. Osborne (1996) suggested that the universities' opposition to many of the principles advanced by the HEA were short-sighted and that the universities did not propose alternatives to provide

greater autonomy. A 1995 'position paper' by the DES on university governance outlined the principles for restructuring the governing bodies of universities and the roles of university presidents.

In 1995, TEASTAS established the groundwork for the Qualifications Education and Training Act. Consequently, the National Qualifications Authority of Ireland was established in 2001 to establish and maintain the National Qualifications Framework, encouraging access, transfer and progression. This framework allows for ten levels of learning from the most basic to the most advanced levels. HETAC is the awarding body for third level qualifications outside of the university sector including awards from Level 6, (Higher Certificate) through to Level 10 (Doctoral level). The universities' awards range from Level 7 to Level 10.

The Universities Act 1997 set out the functions of a university, the role of the governing bodies, its staffing arrangements, the role of academic councils, finance, etc. This Act restructured the NUI, revised the statute regarding interaction between colleges and government and provided greater autonomy and accountability to the individual institutions. Governing bodies are the key governance structure of universities and are composed of student representatives, academic staff, government nominees, graduate representatives, and representatives from business and the community (OECD, 2006). The universities' reaction to the original bill was of concern, particularly regarding the interface between the powers of the Minister for Education and Science, the HEA and the institutions. New accountability procedures were incorporated, which included the preparation of strategic development plans of at least three years. Due to parliamentary debate, some

amendments were made before it was enacted and a balance was struck between institutional autonomy and the demands to respond to public policy needs. Section 14 states;

A university in performing its functions shall...be entitled to regulate its affairs in accordance with its independent ethos and traditions and the traditional principles of academic freedom, and in doing so it shall have regard to:

- i) the promotion and preservation of equality of opportunity and access;
- ii) the effective and efficient use of resources and
- iii) its obligations as to public accountability.

While institutional autonomy remains, regional and global influences have influenced Irish policy provision. Ireland subscribed to the Bologna Process, which seeks to establish an EHEA (European Higher Education Area) by 2010 (Commission of the European Communities, 1999). The location of this Declaration in Bologna was symbolically significant as it was site of Europe's first university (Davies, 1996). The Declaration's objectives are included in Appendix Six. Inter-ministerial meetings were set-up on a biennial basis. After these meetings, a Communiqué outlines the areas of action to be addressed for the next meeting. Outside of these meetings, the Bologna Process is managed through the Bologna Follow-up Group (BFUG). Ministers delegate responsibility for the implementation of all the issues covered in the Communiqués, the overall steering of the Bologna Process and the preparation of the next ministerial meeting to the BFUG. The BFUG is composed of the representatives of involved member states and the European Commission (EC). The Council of Europe, the EUA, EURASHE (European Association of Institutions of Higher Education), ESIB (European Students Information Bureau – now European Students Union) and

UNESCO/CEPES (Centre for Higher Education) are consultative members. This group, which meets biannually, is chaired by the EU Presidency state (BFUG, 2009b).

The OECD also recognises that third level institutions are central to the continued Irish economic success and to assist with a smooth transition to the knowledge society (Bradley, 2007). The OECD cautioned that unless there are internal changes introduced, including new-style management, accountability and cost efficiency, Irish universities will be marginalised in this competitive environment. The 2001 Skilbeck Report was commissioned by the HEA and the Conference of Heads of Irish Universities (now called IUA) and stimulated much debate. It provides an overview of trends in higher education in Ireland and highlighted key concerns regarding Ireland's position in international higher education. In 2003, the Minister for Education requested the OECD to review Irish higher education.

The 2004 OECD Review of Irish Higher Education concentrated on how education might service the economy, proposing that education be treated as a market. Both the Skilbeck Report (2001) and the OECD 2004 Review recommended institutional and structural reform including the widening of and increasing the student intake, addressing increased private funding and improving access to non-traditional groups (Bradley, 2007). In 2006, another review of the higher education policies was completed by the OECD, at the request of the Government, and observed that public policy is fragmented across government departments with no effective, coordinating mechanism to link priorities of a national scale to government departments (OECD,

2006). It noted that changes to governance and management were required within the individual HEIs who required greater government autonomy.

2.5. University College Dublin

This university was an important component in transforming the nation state in Europe and UCD was central to Ireland's construction. UCD is Ireland's largest university and is perceived as integral to Ireland's development. As outlined by UCD's President:

Through its staff, students and alumni, UCD has been a central player in the development of all facets of the Irish state and society: cultural, social, political, professional, sporting and economic (Brady, 2004).

UCD commenced life as the Catholic University. In the mid-1850's, the Irish bishops decided that an Irish university should be founded in Dublin. It was established in the years after Catholic Emancipation to make higher education accessible to Irish Catholics. John Henry Newman, a distinguished Oxford convert to the Catholic faith, was invited to become the rector of the Catholic University. In 1854, a section of the Catholic hierarchy provided support for its establishment, which would be styled on the University of Louvain (Curry, 2003). An application for a charter for a university and state funding was rejected. Cardinal Newman withdrew his association with the university in 1858. With no charter for the Catholic University and with limited financial resources, it deteriorated but survived until it became one of the Constituent Colleges of NUI, under the Act of 1908. At the beginning of the twentieth century, a new Catholic middle class was emerging and the establishment of this new NUI met with its demands (Anderson, 2004).

As UCD evolved it became a nursery for nationalist intellectuals and counted amongst its graduates the founding generation of Irish independence including Padraig Pearse (Anderson, 2004). Key members of the Irish republican movement were staff members or students including Eamon deValera, Douglas Hyde, Eoin MacNeill and Francis Skeffington. Other notable graduates included James Joyce, Gerard Manley Hopkins and a number of Taoisigh. The university's role in nation building, particularly during the state's foundation, was unparalleled with other HEIs. There was a sense of anticipation in the creation of the new state and UCD students expected to be called upon to 'play a leading part in the moulding of the new state' (McCartney, 1999:98). In 1919, Dail Eireann was established and the association between the university and the Irish nationalists continued through the involvement of UCD students (McCartney, 1999).

In 1926, UCD graduates and staff involved in the government were responsible for the University Education Act which transferred the Royal College of Science and the Albert Agricultural College to UCD. In 1947, UCD's president, Michael Tierney, conceived of the relocation of UCD on a suburban site at Belfield. Only Tierney's hero, Newman had taken up UCD's cause with the same determination (McCartney, 1999). Newman's vision of a university for the Irish nation was not realised and Tierney's goal was to fulfil Newman's ambition. As early as 1903, it was proposed that UCD should be a Catholic University in the sense that Trinity was Protestant. The establishment of the NUI instituted 'home government' in university education for the Catholic community and was looked upon by clergy and laity as an opportunity for advancing the Catholic moral ethos in higher education. The close relationship between UCD and the Catholic Church

continued into the 1960's with the involvement of Archbishop McQuaid (the former Catholic Archbishop of Dublin from 1940-72), who took a personal interest in UCD. Archbishop McQuaid was Rector of the Catholic University and was a key influence on UCD during the earlier decades of his ministry (O'Meara, 2003).

UCD continued to expand into the 1960's. The student population grew from over 2,000 in 1939 to over 10,000 in 1969 (McCartney, 1999:345). At this time, universities in other countries, e.g. in the USA and France, witnessed major student protests. In 1967, the Minister of Education proposed a controversial merger between UCD and Trinity College, which had an unsettling affect on the university. Student movements in other countries reverberated in Dublin and a 'gentle revolution' at UCD ensued. Protests at the grants provided to students and student concerns with university governance at the college occurred in 1968. These protests were classified by McCartney (1999:387) as the 'growing pains of a society in transition'.

Much of the 1970's was consumed with UCD's move from Earlsfort Terrace to Belfield, a greenfield site. At this time of economic depression and government cut-backs, a number of delays were experienced in the construction of the buildings at this new location. As a result, the construction of some buildings continued into the 1980's. By the mid-1980's, the dream of a university campus at Belfield was evolving into a reality. Fears of the affect of the new site and its lack of history arose and compelled the Academic Council to announce that:

As for tradition, the College will still have behind it an unbroken academic history going back to Newman and the Catholic University a history always looking to and preparing for such fulfilment as now appears to be close at hand (cited by McCartney, 1999:402).

As UCD continued to develop, it retained its unique position in Irish higher education. Although UCD was associated with its 'provincial constituent colleges in Cork and Galway, the 'national' UCD was considered as the 'senior sister' (McCartney, 2008:89). The federal association with the more provincial colleges promoted UCD's opinion of itself as a national institution. This fuelled the perception that UCD should be independent from the NUI. In 1989, discussion about UCD's independence re-emerged. While UCD was the largest institution in Dublin, it was a constituent college of NUI. Dublin City University and Trinity were smaller institutions with full university status. A working party of the governing body suggested that UCD apply for independent university status with Cork, Galway and Maynooth within a confederate NUI. This recommendation became the basis for the University Act in 1997. The powers vested in the Senate, under the 1908 legislative arrangement, were transferred to the governing authorities in the new universities. The Universities Act conferred independence to UCD and retained its federal link with the NUI (McCartney, 2008). The Universities Act 1997 officially renamed UCD as National University of Ireland, Dublin. In 1998, a Ministerial Order renamed it 'University College Dublin - National University of Ireland, Dublin'.

2.5.1 UCD Today

UCD is Ireland's largest and most diverse university due to its breadth of disciplines. UCD experienced publicised changes to its statutes and institutional structures since 2004 (Lynch, 2006). Prior to these reforms, UCD was perceived to be under-performing and the 'sleeping giant' of the Irish universities (Irish Times, 2004). In 2004, a new President (i.e. Vice

Chancellor) took up office, who had worked at Harvard University for nine years. At his inaugural address, Hugh Brady outlined a vision for UCD:

A research-intensive university where bold and imaginative educational programmes and excellence in teaching go hand in glove with a commitment to the discovery process, research and innovation; a university that is shaping agenda nationally – supporting where appropriate and challenging where warranted; a university that is truly international and truly Irish; a university where excellence is a benchmark for everything that we do, whether it be teaching, research or administration (Brady, 2004).

The Universities Act 1997 modified the statutory framework between the Irish government and the colleges, centralising power and control in singular higher education institutions. Features of ‘new managerialism’ evident in higher education include changes to the funding environment, academic work and workloads, introduction of cost centres and an increase in the proportion of managers (Lynch, 2006). UCD’s structural changes included Statute 6, governing the day-to-day university operations, alteration and increasingly centralised power with the President and his ‘Senior Management Team’. Staff challenged and resisted these changes, particularly those that appear to erode staff democratic controls. Despite these challenges, changes were pushed through, with few concessions (Lynch, 2006).

As part of UCD’s reform agenda, the ninety-plus departments and eleven faculties were consolidated into thirty-five schools and five colleges. The five colleges were provided with College Principals (replacing Deans) who were assigned with managerial roles, including responsibility for target setting and monitoring outputs (Clancy, 2007b). Accusations were made that the collegial culture was replaced with a pro-business culture, minority subjects were downgraded, staff morale declined and science and technology were prioritised over arts and humanities (Clancy, 2007b). One of the publicised

examples of this was the downgrading of Old Irish as a taught subject (Irish Times, 2007). Early Irish and Medieval Studies were downgraded from full degree status in 2007 and the subject chair abolished.

The Times Higher Education/Qs University World Rankings placed UCD at number 89 (Flynn, 2009). In acknowledging UCD's rank, Dr Brady outlined:

While one could find fault with any university ranking system, the reality is that rankings matter: they matter when top-quality international students and staff are choosing a university, they matter increasingly to Irish students when deciding whether to study in Ireland or abroad, and they are cited as one of the top 10 reasons why multinational companies choose a particular region in which to invest (Brady cited by Flynn, 2009).

UCD School of Business commenced as the Faculty of Commerce in 1908. In 1964, it launched the first MBA programme in Europe. In 2005, the Faculty of Commerce opened its doors to the Quinn School as the location for its undergraduate programmes and was the first business school in Ireland where students would have personal laptops in class as part of its e-learning environment. The UCD Michael Smurfit School of Business houses the postgraduate programmes. In 2004, due to academic restructuring, the Faculty of Commerce was incorporated into the new College of Business and Law. Currently, the School of Business is Ireland's only world ranked business school. It is the only business school in Ireland with triple crown accreditation from the AACSB (the Association of Advance Collegiate Schools of Business), EQUIS (The European Quality Improvement System in Management and Business Administration) and AMBA (The Association of Master of Business Administrations). UCD School of Business currently has approximately 3,000 students and 30,000 alumni.

CHAPTER THREE - LITERATURE REVIEW

3.0. Introduction

The rise of the 'European Education Space' signifies that trans-national governance has altered the roles of national system policy actors (Lawn, 2006; Lawn and Lingard, 2002). Enders (2004) suggested the impact of such governance changes for the micro/institutional policy processes has been under-researched. The policy dynamic between the macro, meso and micro levels requires investigation from a contextual perspective, to understand the changing relationships, soliciting the question **'How do the supranational processes of integration and policy making affect UCD's policy production'**? The complexity of regional and global influences creates difficulty for policy analysis and investigation of how these policy processes work nationally (Ball, 2008) and locally (Enders, 2004). This review investigates the conceptual tools available regarding higher educational policy, to understand policy production institutionally. There is a multi-disciplinary dimension to this review, drawing on literature from policy sociology, political sociology, international relations, European studies and education. Given the scope of possible contributions to this chapter, certain areas of literature are interlinked and receive greater attention based on the interpretation of the research question. There are five sections: defining policy; globalisation and education; theoretical tools; governance and education; the Bologna Process and governance.

3.1 Defining policy

Before exploring some of the tools regarding policy formulation and implementation, the term 'policy' is defined as a range of activities, including the defining of objectives, the setting of priorities, the description of a plan and the specification of decision rules (Gordon *et al.*, 1993). Policy is a vehicle for carrying policy messages (Ozga, 2000) and is more than a specific policy document; it is both process and product. Policy

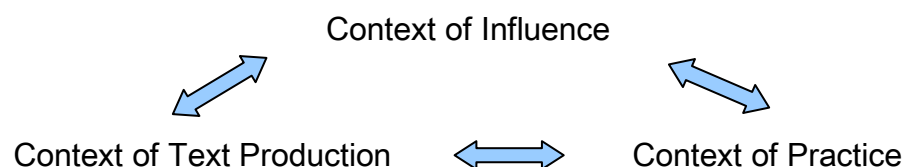
...involves the production of the text, the text itself, ongoing modifications to the text and processes of implementation into practice (Taylor *et al.*, 1997:25).

Ball (2008) suggested that policy has multiple uses which can be broadly conceived in two forms. The 'big-P' policy is associated with public government and is generally a legislated policy (Ball, 2008; Evans *et al.*, 2008). 'Little-p' policy is created and endorsed within institutions and localities. While policy might be announced through legislation, it may be rewritten over time into reports and speeches, etc., and interpreted by different actors, at different stages. Policies can be conceived as systems of values and symbolic systems, ways of accounting for and justifying political systems and political decisions (Ball, 2008). Education policy must be situated in national and global levels, as a transformative discourse that can have real social effects, e.g. the free third level education policy in Ireland had a number of societal effects. (See Chapter 2). Thus, policy is not an object, a product or an outcome but an evolving, interactional process (Ball, 2008). Some of the work of policy is done in and through policy text, both written and spoken, and the ways in which they represent policy subjects. They have a semantic and ontological force to varying degrees and play their part in the construction of a social world of meanings, causes and effects, imperatives,

inevitable and relations. By reviewing the construction of language and rhetoric of education policy, it is possible to understand how policies have histories and how they react and relate within and across different policy fields. (Please see Chapter 3.3.2.3).

The concept of a 'policy trajectory' seeks to capture the policy dynamics across and between levels (Ball, 1997). Such an approach allows researchers to outline the development, structure and attainment of policies from the context of influence, through policy text production, to practices and outcomes (Ball, 1997; Ball, 2006). Policies are always incomplete, as they communicate with or attach onto the 'wild profusion of local practice' (Ball, 1994:10). The policy process has multiple layers and each layer necessitates analysis, which then informs the analysis of other layers. The process is complex and non linear, with a two-way relationship existing between each layer. Bowe *et al.* (1992) demonstrated the cyclical nature of this relationship and how implementation frames the interpretation of actors, demonstrating top-down and bottom-up approaches. They assembled policy production as the context of influence, the context of text production and the context of practice, into the 'policy cycle'. See Figure 3.1:

Figure 3.1: The Policy Cycle



(Bowe *et al.*, 1992:20)

While this heuristic is useful, it has been construed as apolitical and historically naïve (Ozga, 1990). It oversimplifies the complex and dynamic relationship between the three spheres. For example, agencies operate in the ‘Context of Influence’ to differing degrees and can compete to influence a policy. As the policy process is an essentially political process, it involves compromise, negotiation and settlement. Two additional contexts were added to the policy cycle; the context of outcomes and the context of political strategy (Ball, 1994). Recently, the globalising of the policy cycle, as an emergent global policy field in education, was acknowledged to reflect the global diaspora of policy ideas (Lingard, 2000). (See Section 3.2).

3.1.1 Policy Analysis

Gordon *et al.* differentiated between ‘analysis for’ and ‘analysis of’. (See Table 3.1). They suggested a scale of policy analysis from the analysis for policy (i.e. in terms of information for policy and policy monitoring and evaluation) to the analysis of policy (i.e. analysis of policy determination and the analysis of policy content) (Gordon *et al.*, 1993). This thesis is concerned with the analysis of policy.

Table 3.1 Policy Analysis

Analysis for policy			Analysis of policy	
Policy Advocacy	Information for Policy	Policy monitoring and evaluation	Analysis of policy determination	Analysis of policy content

(Gordon *et al.*, 1993:5)

The analysis of policy determination focused upon the contributions and transformational methods occurring in policy construction. This model of analysis is perceived as 'driven' by internal agendas or environmental agendas or both. There is a distinction between this stage and policy 'advocacy' or 'information', as this mode of analysis highlights the limitations upon action to the stage that activity patterns are depicted as essential results of the confluences of a number of influences. Analysis of policy content focused upon the origins, intentions and operations of specific policies, in this study of modularisation (Gordon *et al.*, 1993). These accounts advance academic purposes rather than demonstrating the public impact of policy. Study of content employs an analysis of value, revealing how social policy institutionalises social theory. While some (e.g. Grindle and Thomas, 1991) saw policymaking as a rational process based upon problem formulation, evaluation of alternatives, and then implementation, others (e.g. Ball, 2008) acknowledged it as a political activity involving individual actors at each of the stages in the rational process, e.g. discussion on Bologna. Process outlines how policy making is a political activity mediated by a range of actors. (See Section 3.5). Thus, the policy outcome is a negotiated outcome, underpinned by power. (See Section 3.3.1 for a definition of power). The policy process is a political activity.

Two factors determine policy success: local capacity and will (McLaughlin Wallin, 1987:172). At each stage of the policy process, a policy is transformed as individuals interpret and respond to it. What actually is delivered under the aegis of the policy often depends on the individual who implements it (Weatherly and Lipsky, 1977). Such a viewpoint redirects the focus of analysis from 'institutions and institutional goals to individual incentives,

beliefs and capacity' (McLaughlin Wallin, 1987:174). Organisations do not innovate or implement change; individuals do. While this research is not focused upon the end policy of modularisation at UCD, it provides a tangible policy outcome to study how supranational agencies engage with national policy entities and individual institutions.

3.2 Globalisation and Education

Globalisation is increasingly a theme in the literature on education policy. This section reviews the concept of globalisation, its features and the mechanisms by which globalisation affects national policy agendas. The concepts related to globalisation are heavily inter-related in the literature and the extent of this interrelationship is reflected in this forthcoming discussion. For example, as illustrated later, the concept of 'vernacular globalisation' is pervasive in both the theory of globalisation generally and the literature regarding the globalisation of education policy.

There is evidence of the construction of a global education agenda (King, 2007; Dale, 2009; Lawn and Lingard, 2002) which reconfigures the state's authority and instigates new communication models which permeate across national boundaries. The assumption that the state retains political authority cannot be maintained. The values promoted through education policy and systems of education are established by those within the nation state and due to complex processes occurring in global and transnational areas (Rizvi and Lingard, 2010). Thus, national policy, in response to global pressures, is increasingly a process of bricolage, where policy is borrowed and copied from ideas from elsewhere, drawing on and amending locally tried and tested approaches (Ball, 2008: 30). The process of globalisation is exporting

ideas, trends and policy. As a term, globalisation is contested and relates to changes in patterns of economic, political and cultural constructions. Globalisation is:

... a process (or set of processes) which embodies a transformation in the spatial organization of social relations and transactions – assessed in terms of their extensity, intensity, velocity and impact – generating transcontinental or interregional flows and networks of activity, interaction and the exercise of power (Held *et al.*, 1999:16).

Particularly, the globalisation of higher education is:

...a process in which basic social arrangements within and around the university become disembedded from their national context due to the intensification of transnational flows of people, information and resources (Beerens, 2004:24).

Three divergent positions were recognisable regarding the globalisation debate; the globalists, sceptics, and transformalists (Held and McGrew, 2003). Globalists view globalisation as a genuine historical development, dramatically altering society. Conversely, sceptics believe globalisation is socially constructed and provided little rational value. Neither position explains the impact of global events on society. Transformalists suggest that globalisation has a tangible outline, evidenced by increasing global flows of trade, people, ideas and capital. This explanation of globalisation provides a useful way to see how the world is becoming more interconnected within and beyond the nation state. As an ideology, it led to a greater sense of a 'global consciousness' (Robertson, 1992).

The term globalisation is often incorrectly substituted for the terms internationalisation, regionalisation and de-nationalisation. First,

internationalisation refers mostly to co-operation between states and the activities which occur across state borders. In this conceptualisation of internationalisation, the nation state plays a pivotal role. Regionalisation is described as the process of increased regional cooperation or integration on equal terms between multiple actors including governments, higher education sectors and institutions (Enders, 2004). This contrasts with the process of globalisation whereby increasing interdependence is evident between states and supranational agencies and where state power is challenged (Enders, 2004). Often global agencies, e.g. OECD and the EU, advocate internationalisation of higher education institutions as part of their global discourse. Robertson (2009) argued that the internationalising of higher education in Europe is represented as a process of regionalisation.

Appadurai highlighted that in the globalised present there were disjunctions between the flows of economics, politics and culture and used the concepts of 'scapes' (Appadurai, 1996). 'Policyscapes' articulated the supranational policy flows, decanted into the multiple layers of educational policy, from local, national, international (between nations), transnational (pass through national boundaries) to the global (Mann, 2000). Academics have suggested these global 'flows' have impacted on the nation-state and made national boundaries more permeable (Appadurai, 1996; Castells, 2000). While the power of the nation-state may have decreased, the nation-state is not powerless, retaining some ability to politically interject in the forces of globalisation (Lingard, 2000:80). Rather than seeing a right-wing programme marginalising the nation's autonomy and the implementation of a strictly global conservative ideology, a 'vernacular globalisation' is evident, where this conservative globalised ideology is meshed with local policies and

practices. This term, 'vernacular globalisation', acknowledges the conflict between the 'context-generative' (localised) practices and the 'context-productive' (top-down and policy driven). Vernacular globalisation is the melting pot between the two (Appadurai, 1996) and a hybrid of the global, national and local influences, shaping the development of policy within nation-states.

3.2.1. Globalisation, Neo-liberalism and New Public Management

The state is often perceived as a servant of the market, associated with the changing relationship between Europeanisation and globalisation (Dale, 2009:30). Such policy shifts are associated with a neo-liberal agenda promoted by many non-governmental and inter-governmental agencies, e.g. the World Bank. It was underpinned by features including the decline of the state as the basis of the economy and the movement of capital. Some argued that trends in educational policies and structures were derived from a neo-liberalist agenda (Lynch, 2006) and associated with New Public Management (NPM) (Kettl, 1997; Pollitt & Bouckaert, 2004). NPM centres on five elements: neo-liberalism, new institutional economics, performativity¹, public choice theory and new managerialism (Ball, 2006:70). Neo-liberalism refers to the ideology that human well-being is best served by freeing individual entrepreneurial freedoms and skills within an institutional structure typified by free markets, free trade and strong private property rights (Harvey, 2007). NPM was based upon a culture of performativity and managerialism, founded upon devolution, targets and incentives, and relies upon surveillance and self-monitoring (Ball, 2006). Many of what were recognised

¹Bourdieu (1991) uses the term 'performativity' differently to Ball (2006). Bourdieu suggests performance, e.g. marriage, is a performance and is also embedded in the social structures and norms that authorize them. This thesis uses Ball's interpretation, as it is more relevant to this study.

as state activities, could, and should, be funded and provided by other, often private bodies, with benefits to both state expenditure and quality of service. It moved from the supposition that the 'state does it all' to acknowledging those activities can be defined and divided differently, among different potential agents (Dale, 2009). In a European context, these developments culminated in the Lisbon Agenda, where a set of responsibilities for education were detailed, with the condition that they could only be met at EU level, heralding a new era for European involvement in education (Dale, 2009) and the increasing relevance of economic factors, such as international economic competition and the need for a supply of highly skilled workforce for the knowledge economy (Veiga and Amaral, 2006).

3.2.2 Educational policy production in a global context

Habermas suggested that as the world economy functions generally separately from political structures, national governments are restricted to fostering the modernisation of their national economies and consequently adapting national welfare systems to what is called the 'capacity for international competition' (Habermas, 1996: 292). While globalisation is a dominant influence on the 'bricolage' of education policy, there is no fundamental determinacy to the responses of these pressures (Dale, 2009). While major global discourses might be identified in different contexts, e.g. the internationalisation of higher education, there is no single response to these discourses as different sites respond in different ways. Despite the variety of responses to the neo-liberal agenda, some suggested that globalisation of economies has reduced the power of national governments for policy production (Brown and Lauder, 1997). Nation-states are not the 'natural' containers of societies (Wimmer and Glick Schiller, 2002:327; Lawn,

2006). Others suggested higher education policy is influenced at a national level. Some nation-states appear more able to and more likely to avert or negotiate global trends, while others accept the demands of external reforms. There has been an oversimplification of the outcome of this debate about globalisation and a 'relational position' has emerged away from the logic of determinism (Ball, 2008). Before discussing tensions within education policy, the global policy cycle is discussed.

While some assumed policy making in higher education is primarily shaped at a national level (de Wit, 2002; Enders, 2004), policy is increasingly influenced by intergovernmental agreements, e.g. the Bologna process. Supranational agencies orient national policies in higher education by leading systemic and structural changes (Amaral and Magalhaes, 2001; Deem and Brehony, 2005; Dewey and Duff 2009; Horta, 2009; Kondakci and Van den Broeck, 2009). Political structures working beyond nations increasingly structure national policies, suggesting the emergence of an education policy community across the political elites of supranational agencies (e.g. OECD and the World Bank) and national education systems (Henry, Lingard *et al.*, 2001). Consequently, Taylor *et al.* suggested an emergent education policy community of political elites from international agencies and national education systems (Taylor *et al.*, 1997). These elites engage in a globalised education policy discourse which affects the production of policy within individual nations (Amos *et al.*, 2002). From this global education policy discourse emerged the pursuit of restructuring based upon neo-liberal tenets, e.g. accountability, lifelong learning, international competitiveness, etc., (Ozga and Lingard, 2006).

As acknowledged, policy becomes the product of a set of complex and ongoing relationships between the contexts of influence, practice and text production. Until recently, the policy cycle in the field of education did not fully account for the power shared at national, regional and international levels (Gerwitz, 2002)². Ball and other theorists of policy presumed that political authority is retained within the structures of the nation state where policy was purchased (Rizvi, 2006). National government and its agencies are presumed as the locus of origin for education public policies. This belief assumes that the state is sovereign and exercises authority across a defined geographical location with the autonomy to develop its own policies and underpinned by the assumption that no external actor enjoys authority within its borders (Rizvi, 2006). Thus, the policy cycle required revision to recognise the pressures beyond the nation state which might impact on educational policy construction and execution. It needed to identify the emergence of a global policy field, reflecting the production of policy text which accounts for the diaspora of policy ideas globally and the affect of globalisation on policy practices at the level of the individual and their institution (Lingard, 2000). A global dimension to the policy cycle highlights that all three contexts of the policy cycle are affected in different fashions by globalisation.

3.2.3 Mechanisms of globalisation

Dale (1999) suggested qualitatively different mechanisms by which globalisation affects national policy agendas. These mechanisms described were not 'neutral conduits': they alter the nature of the effect they convey and vary from 'traditional' mechanisms as their locus of viability is external

² In other disciplines, e.g. political science, other academics, e.g. Keating and Hooghe (2006), have highlighted in greater depth the importance of multi-level governance for many years.

(i.e. the viability of the policy is judged at global, rather than national level), the scope of their policy embraced externally initiated goals and processes, and they drew upon a wider variety of power. Where the locus of viability was external, it highlighted the status and power of global agencies to influence national agendas. Dale (1999) considered five mechanisms associated with elements of globalisation, which build upon the traditional mechanisms of 'policy borrowing' and 'policy learning': harmonisation, dissemination, standardisation, installing interdependence and imposition. Dale utilised these mechanisms to demonstrate that globalisation characterises a unique phenomenon. (See Appendix Four).

Seven attributes differentiate between the different policy mechanisms. First variability is the extent to which reforms are voluntarily accepted by the receiving nation. Second is the extent to which the process is explicit within the nation of transfer. Third is the scope of the externally influenced reform, if its effects are limited to policy programmes and organisation or whether they involve policy goals. The locus of viability is the fourth dimension and refers to whether the policy is assumed to be determined by a national level, in keeping with national norms, as generally globalisation suggests that this is no longer the case. The fifth dimension refers to the process which introduced external influences, which are likely to alter collaborative processes at a national level. The source of initiation is the sixth dimension and requires review of the origins of the policies initiation. With the globalisation of policy, policy is suggested as imposed, not by other countries but by supranational agencies. The seventh dimension was derived from power and builds upon Lukes' (1974) concept of power. (See 3.3.1 for the definition of power). It refers to overt power, and/or the politics of non-

decision making and/or power exerted through the control of the 'rules of the game'. Such forms of power are difficult to identify. Dale's final dimension shows how the externally introduced change is mediated and acknowledges the possibility of explicit, implied or indirect effects.

This typology attempted to explore the mechanisms through which globalisation affects national policies by identifying the qualitative differences in its approach. It suggests that the mechanisms of globalisation are different to the more orthodox modes of policy transfer instigated by a nation (Dale, 1999:15). Until this typology, it was largely believed the effects of globalisation were indirect and resultant from the state's position in its response to globalisation, rather than as a direct effect of it. However, it provides an insight into the mechanisms of globalisation or regionalisation, without addressing explicitly the affect on national and institutional policy processes. These processes were discussed without a robust empirical base. In reviewing the impact of these policy mechanisms, the convergence and divergence theses provided contrasting insights.

3.2.3.1 The Convergence Thesis

Due to the process of globalisation and its multiple mechanisms, there are examples of policies and discourses supporting 'convergence', e.g. the harmonisation qualifications in the Bologna Process (Van der Wende, 2002). The pattern towards convergence of the economic dimension of internationalisation is notable given that the unique context of internationalisation differs between and within countries (Stenstaker *et al.*, 2008). 'Global institutionalists' suggest that global models of political institutions instigate convergence of agents. International organisations, e.g.

the OECD and the EU, are viewed as catalysts, spreading a global agenda and instigating convergence of practice and policy amongst nations (McNeeley and Yun-Kyung, 1994; Rizvi and Lingard, 2010). Such organisations proselytise the neo-liberalism tenets into the educational agendas of their members by inculcating a focus on performativity and an ethos of educational underpinning the economic agenda.

3.2.3.2 The Divergence Thesis

While globalisation of the policy cycle suggested convergence across nations, global policy agendas do not operate in isolation: they intersect and intermesh with national customs, structures, philosophies, and politics that, result in vernacular education policy outcomes (Ozga and Lingard, 2006). 'Travelling policies' create common agendas, which coalesce with 'embedded policies' (Alexiadou and Jones, 2001), i.e. policies accounting for existing priorities and practices found in national, regional or local spaces. Such travelling policies may create common agendas but these agendas coalesce with 'embedded policies', i.e. policies accounting for existing priorities and practices found in national, regional or local spaces (Alexiadou and Jones, 2001). Often at a local level, the institutional culture and values of higher education institutions help and impede institutional change in the area of internationalisation (Bartel, 2003; Beerkens, 2004).

3.2.3.3 Vernacular Globalisation and Education

As national boundaries become more porous, creating 'an emergent post-national era' (Appadurai, 1996), the 'flows' of people can be slowed, e.g. in the aftermath of the 'September 11th 2001 attacks', and the nation-state, though reconstituted, is still politically important, while being reconstituted

(Lingard and Gale, 2007). The vernacular education policy outcomes described by Ozga and Lingard (2006) suggest policies were mediated by the nation to provide a unique policy. Nations have different capacities to mediate and ameliorate the effects of global pressures and globalised education policy discourses produced by supranational agencies (Ozga and Lingard, 2006). Henry *et al.* proposed that the OECD has had more salience in Australia and Scandinavia than in the U.K. (Henry *et al.*, 2001). The emergence of a European educational policy space demonstrated the impact of structural adjustment and convergence effects in the educational politics of net benefactor countries within the EU (i.e. in the least powerful and developed Mediterranean rim countries) (Lawn and Lingard, 2002).

The OECD, EU and UNESCO are active in encouraging universities to internationalise (e.g. OECD, 2004). Stensaker *et al.* (2008) suggested internationalisation requires particular conceptual advancement by reviewing institutions that perceive and adapt their policies in response. Such an institutional level of analysis allows the investigation of the conditions for policy effectiveness (Enders, 2004). As higher education institutions are engrained with values and traditions, an institutional level study highlights the outcome of national policy-making activities and international agendas (Enders, 2004). This stimulates investigation of how the state and its interior were reconstituted or 'relativized' (Waters, 1995) by forces outside its border (Rizvi, 2006).

3.2.3.4 Universities and the Disembedding Thesis

Universities appear to be both subjects and objects of, influenced and affected by globalisation through educational discourse, governance and policy-making (Vaira, 2004). Universities are affected differently by globalisation (Scott, 1998) and groups within one university can be affected differently (Beerkens, 2004). Traditionally, higher education institutions were organisations where authority and power were scattered and not easily identified (Birnbaum, 1991; Clark, 1991). The relationship of universities to globalisation is of interest, not least as universities represent a project of a nation state's cultural identity (Enders, 2004; Kwiek, 2000). Universities were international institutions due to the movement of staff and students since medieval times. They have a historical role in the process of nation-building and have an innate dependence on it (Enders, 2004). Universities also perform socio-economic, educational, scientific, cultural and ideological roles. Wittrock classified the formation of the modern university as the most typical and important form of political organisation (Wittrock, 1993).

Higher education institutions, and particularly national universities oriented to a research agenda, have been challenged by the agendas of internationalisation or globalisation (Teichler, 2004). Marginson and van der Wende (2006:22) suggested forces in higher education disembed universities from their national contexts because the forces of globalisation exceeded the strength of national factors. The 'disembedding hypothesis' characterises the relationship between global and national elements not as symbiotic (as in the notion of the national domain as a filter of global effects), but as a zero-sum relationship. This institutional disembedding from national contexts begins with transformations to cross-border education and research and changed

the institution into the global dimension, creating potential changes to funding that are hard to control or reverse nationally. Some higher education institutions alter to highlight the international dimension, e.g. UCD has begun to engage with global agencies and networks, recruited international students and staff, and prioritise international research (Lynch, 2006). In assessing the extent of institutions disembedding from their national contexts, the magnitude and scale of these developments must be considered. Where institutions disembed, the national system of higher education becomes a complex blend where institutions have varied degrees of national accountability. If policy and governance do not keep pace with missions and cross-border activities, institutions disembed as their business falls outside national governance structures and regulatory frameworks.

The rationale for institutional engagement in internationalisation activities, arising from a global discourse, is well documented and divided by de Wit (1999) in four categories: academic; social/cultural; political; and economic. The academic and social/cultural reasons for internationalisation are specific to institutions and require institutional adaptation to external influences. Generally, the first two are associated with 'old' forms of internationalisation (Trondal *et al.*, 2001) and the second two with 'new' forms. (See Table 3.2). Stensaker *et al.* (2008) observed that this could also be categorised by 'progressive' countries, which are more advanced in their internationalisation of education, e.g. the UK and USA, and the older forms of internationalisation associated with nations at an earlier stage of internationalisation. Steiner-Khamsi (2004) suggested evidence of 'reference societies' which are countries from whence progressive policies are 'borrowed' and 'lent'.

**Table 3.2 Reasons for and manifestations of
internationalisation in higher education**

Academic, social/cultural reasons often manifested in 'old' forms of internationalisation.	Political and economic reasons often manifested in 'new' forms of internationalisation.
Internationalisation as	Internationalisation as
responsibility for the individual student or teacher	responsibility for the department or institution
'bottom-up' activity	'top-down' activity
related to diversity	related to standardisation
physical activity (e.g. through mobility)	more technology enhanced activity (e.g. through ICT)
informal and ad-hoc activity	formal and routinised activity

(Stensaker *et al.*, 2008:4)

Stensaker *et al.* (2008) suggested in the case of Nordic higher education institutions, internationalisation became a vehicle for creating institutional awareness about important issues, e.g. strategic choices, etc. They suggested that internationalisation was 'filtered through' the characteristics of the institution, e.g. location, status and institutional culture. As institutions moved from old forms to new forms of internationalisation, this overlap was not always coordinated and continued to provide significant scope to individual academics, regarding the autonomy to implement change (Stensaker *et al.*, 2008; Beerkens and van der Wende, 2007). Despite an individual's autonomy, Stensaker *et al.* (2008) observed a gap existing between the institutional interpretation of internationalisation and national policy-making. This occurred, despite the scope for greater institutional autonomy in many countries (Enders, 2004). Despite convergence in internationalisation, it occurred at a national policy level and somewhat in the structures of institutions, rather than in the institution's strategy and

'shop floor' (Stensaker *et al.*, 2008). This study raises questions of how subtle policy-making stimulates the internationalisation of institutions.

In reviewing discussion regarding education policy's increasingly international dimension, the national state is the primary locus of policy production within the state and the increasingly global dimension to policy production is simply a rescaling of the national and global relationship, overlooking the role of individual institutions or agents. These developments question the locus of power. A number of conceptual tools are reviewed to address this.

3.3 Theoretical Tools

To discuss policy production and the renegotiation of power relationships between global, national and institutional agencies, it was necessary to define power and identify the different conceptions of power. Then, theoretical tools which explain the structure of power are outlined, including Bourdieu's 'conceptual triad', pluralism and policy networks. These concepts are mutually exclusive but co-exist within different disciplinary divisions. This literature review investigates these tools and explores how they might contribute to this study of policy processes.

3.3.1 Power

Hall suggested three classes of power: economic, ideological and political (Hall, 1995). Bobbio (1983 cited by Poggi 1990) suggested social power is a source of power as within society, some people consistently appeared more capable than others in pursuing their own objectives; and if these were incompatible with those envisaged by others, the former managed to ignore

or overcome the latter's preference, indicating social power. Building on Hall's suggestion of power as a political manifestation, Bulpitt (1983) suggested that power is spatially organised by territory or centre/periphery relations. In discussing the UK's territorial politics, territorial politics was characterised by a structural dichotomy of 'centre/periphery'. The centre distinguishes between high politics and low politics: it emphasised the desirability of autonomy for the centre in matters of high politics and indirect rule of the periphery by local elite collaborators.

Hall (1995) suggested two definitions of power. The first emphasised coercion, or command, and the ability to get someone to do something against their will. The second defined power as a capacity created by social agreement. The latter, also termed 'enabling power', could generate a greater sum of energy since interaction is not a zero-sum game in which one person's will triumphs over the other. While this was an interesting dichotomy, it oversimplified the complex nature of power and its manifestations, as it suggested that power was largely conscious. While Lukes acknowledged that power as domination was only one species of power, he argued power was not just demonstrated in actual events but also possible events (2005). Lukes suggested that power is a 'capacity', a 'facility', 'ability' but not a 'relationship'. He defined power as:

Power as a capacity not the exercise of that capacity (it may never be, and never need to be exercised); and you can be powerful by satisfying and advancing others' interests... (Lukes, 2005:12).

3.3.1.1 Dimensions of Power

Lukes (2005:12) suggested that the first dimension of power is the 'pluralist' view. (The concept of pluralism is discussed in Section 3.3.3). Lukes

highlighted Dahl's discussion of 'observable power' which assumed that issues of power are merely about conflict (2005:17). As a result, conflict was assumed to be critical to observing power attributes and equally assumed that interests were recognised as policy preferences. In this sense, a conflict regarding interests was equal to conflict over preferences but this neglected the notion that interests may be unarticulated or unobservable. This view of power:

...involves a focus on behaviour in the making of decisions on issues over which there is an observable conflict of (subjective) interest, seen as express policy preferences, revealed by political participation (Lukes, 2005:19).

3.3.1.2 Two Dimensional Power

With the proposed two-dimensional view of power, Lukes drew upon Bacharach and Baratz (1970) who proposed the idea of mobilising bias. They discussed this as a collection of prevailing values, beliefs, rituals and institutional procedures (or 'rules of the game') that function systematically and consistently to the advantage of certain persons and groups at the expense of others (Bacharach and Baratz, 1970:43-4). Thus, power was discussed in terms of coercion, influences, authority, force and manipulation and critique pluralists as anti-behavioral because the pluralist approach took little account of power exercised by confining the scope of decision-making to 'safe issues'. Lukes suggested that they refine the parameters of what is a political issue. For pluralists those boundaries were outlined by the political system but Barach and Baratz recognised the potential issues which nondecision-making prevents occurring. Lukes (2005) saw that one and two dimensional approaches stressed the observable conflict, both overt and covert, and suggested that a two-dimensional view of power involving a

qualified critique of the behavioural focus of the first view. This was because it assumed nondecision-making as a form of decision-making, allowing for consideration of the ways in which decisions were averted on potential issues over which there was an observable conflict of interests, embodied in express policy preferences. Lukes (2005:27) suggested that both the one and two dimensional views assume power is demonstrated in authentic conflict and actual conflict is necessary to exert power. Thus, often using power can prevent such conflict from arising in the first instance.

3.3.1.3 Third Dimensional Power

The third-dimensional view of power critiqued the behavioural focus of the first two views as too individualistic. The third dimension allowed for consideration of the different ways in which a potential issue is kept off the political table, through the operation of social forces, institutional practices or through individuals' decisions. It may occur in the absence of observable conflict, which may have been successfully averted. It may occur where an agent exerts power over another agent by getting him/her to do what he does not want to do and also by influencing, shaping or determining his wants. Lukes (1974:23) recognised such power as the 'supreme exercise of power' to get others to have the desires you want them to have. However, there would still remain an implicit reference to potential conflict. This final dimension of power demonstrates the ability to control the 'rules of the game' and the processes through which power was defined and exercised which was less overt and difficult to oppose. This escalating use of less direct means of power was an additional manifestation of the changing relationship between states. For example, power over third world states is less likely to be

bilaterally applied and more likely to be achieved through a supranationally organised rearrangement of the rules of the game (Dale, 1999).

3.3.1.4 Critique of the Three Dimensions of Power

While Lukes' concept was useful to explore power's elusive nature, there were aspects unaddressed. Hearn (2008) suggested a difficulty in thinking about domination as something erroneous to the limitation of human freedom. This was addressed by Lukes' (2005) efforts to focus on the negative effects of domination on those dominated and the revolution of human nature which avoided a more 'systematic conceptualization of kinds of relations of domination' (2008:47). Hearn spoke of malign influence which specified the manner in which agents and institutions have negative but unintended (though not necessarily unknown) effects on individuals and society more generally, in a regular, ongoing fashion. It does not mean that the influence of such agents/institutions need be only or entirely malign. This was an addition to Lukes' conceptualisation of power and highlighted its potential unintended dimensions.

Lukes (2005) responded to behaviorist and pluralist proponents and contested the proposition that social power can be properly comprehended as success in attaining a desired outcome in a process of explicit conflict between interest groups, in the context of decision making for governments when negotiating conflict. Hearn (2008) suggested Lukes accept Bachrach and Baratz's critique of pluralism, that some conflicts were habitually isolated from arenas of public decision-making and that this was part of how power operates. Hearn suggested that a social analysis of power must analyse social relationships and the most useful concepts of domination were

based on the relationship of the dominated and the dominant, not the criteria that defined one or other. Hearn (2008) contended that what was problematic with Lukes' typology was that it did not define domination as harm done to the subject but as a condition of power. Power could be capacity never exercised, so the potential for harm was one way in which power was a theoretical potential (Hearn, 2008). He argued that although this potential argument was more cogent, it was not always an adequate explanation as power could be a matter of a social relationship. This raised questions over the role of agency. Lukes attempted to capture different forms of harm to human agents that might not be visible generally but its lack of definition of what makes an agent the dominator detracts from the three dimensions concept (Hearn, 2008).

3.3.2 Bourdieu's Tools: A nebulous approach?

In reviewing power, Lukes reviewed the theory of Bourdieu and questions if his theories might help to 'open the black box of domination through incorporation' (2005:142). Lukes drew on Bourdieu's concepts of habitus and symbolic violence to show how power could be conceptualised as invisible and encoded in everyday practices beyond our consciousness. Bourdieu's concepts of capital, practice field and habitus have increasingly contributed to understanding policy sociology in the context of globalisation (Hardy and Lingard, 2008; Rawolle and Lingard, 2008; Lingard *et al.*, 2005; Rawolle, 2005). Lingard (2006:292) suggested that the discussion about globalisation 'reified' the concept and failed to locate agency. However, Bourdieu's tools permitted empirical investigation of the construction of the global economic market. Bourdieu helped with the deliberations of education policy as a text, which was produced in a field of policy text, underpinned by its specific

logics and operationalised in a professional practice field with its different logics of practice (Rawolle and Lingard, 2008). Bourdieu's concepts were dominant in the policy sociology literature and provided a structure for themes arising in this research.

Ball (1998:119) addressed the processes of translation and recontextualisation involved in the realisation or endorsement of global policies in national and local settings and suggested that local politics and culture and their interpretation are important in how generic global policies are incorporated into institutional policies and practices. In adopting or integrating travelling policies, policies become decontextualised as they move from the global to the national or local and are recontextualised (Ball, 1998). While these policies were recontextualised, some policies remained pervasive as they move between the global, regional and local contexts. These policies are difficult to trace as they permeate different policyscapes and while Ball (1998) addressed the process of recontextualisation, he did not differentiate between the origins of these discourses. As Bourdieu suggested:

The fact that texts circulate without their context, that—to use my terms—they don't bring with them the field of production of which they are a product, and the fact that recipients, who are themselves in a different field of production, re-interpret the texts in accordance with the structure of the field of reception, are facts that generate some formidable misunderstandings and that can have good or bad consequences (Bourdieu, 1999a:221).

This recontextualisation was fashioned by the habitus of the individuals, institutions, and nations involved. The concept of 'habitus' relates to the internal structures of an individual which become embodied and influence that individual's perceptions and actions in a deeper, practical and often pre-

reflexive way. (Habitus is further discussed in Section 3.3.2.2). Both the theoretical position and methodological character help conceptualise education policy beyond spatial and national limitations (Rizvi and Lingard, 2010). Understanding discourse, as a set of policy ideas and values within its context accounts for the range of rules which may be culturally framed, path dependent, or interest-based on the national level and/or institutionally agreed, which affect policy-making in socio-political settings (Schmidt and Radaelli, 2004:184). This allows discourse to mediate different influences including the formal and informal rules, the social and political norms, the extent of institutional coordination (fragmented or decentralised) and the political governance structure or the governance processes (whether that is pluralist, corporatist or statist) which structure discourse in different settings. Such arrangements set the parameters for what policy is discussed, by whom and the fashion in which it is discussed, assuming cultural norms, historical path dependencies and interest-based behaviours. These factors complicate complex processes within the national context. At a European level, trans-European co-ordinative discourses among policy actors overlap with the national ones on policy formulation, while generally leaving the communicative discourse to national political actors. Because the EU governance system is multi-actor, the co-ordinative discourse tends to be sophisticated, as a multiplicity of actors focused on reaching agreement (Schmidt and Radaelli, 2004). Thus, the context of discourse is a consideration in explaining the policy process and overcoming the structure-agency divide.

The equation between the concept of society and the nation-state in modernity is labelled 'methodological nationalism' by scholars. It assumes

that the nation-state is the accepted and required form of society in modernity (i.e. the organising principle of modernity) (Chernilo, 2006). Bourdieu (1999a) argued that it was necessary to move above 'methodological nationalism' which equates space and social categories, processes and effects with national society as:

... intellectual life, like all other social spaces, is a home to nationalism and imperialism, and intellectuals like everyone else, constantly peddle prejudices, stereotypes, receive ideas and hastily simplistic representations which are fuelled by the chance of everyday happenings of everyday life, like misunderstandings, general incomprehension and wounded pride (such as might be felt at being unknown in a foreign country) (Bourdieu, 1999a:220).

Rawolle and Lingard argued that due to the context of globalisation, rejecting methodological nationalism was central to the research of education policy as policy ideas and those who contributed to the generation of policy 'dwell in travel' (Clifford, 1997). Bourdieu's tools of practice, habitus and social fields were referred to as 'Bourdieu's conceptual triad' (Rawolle and Lingard, 2008:730). They argued that those processes associated with globalisation carry methodological implications for research, which Bourdieu's concepts explained, e.g. the concept of a social field is a physical metaphor that can be applied to global relations and in empirical research such methodological and conceptual developments are required to understand the global comparisons between nations and the emergence of a proportionate global space of educational measurement which influences national education policy fields (Rawolle and Lingard, 2008).

3.3.2.1 Practice

A foundation concept which Bourdieu drew upon is social practice (i.e. the practices of everyday lives, e.g. customs, scientific research and marriage strategies). Bourdieu never defined practice but established the model as an open category for activities which embody a social character and meaning, and whose exact details, effects and structure emerge in the research (Rawolle and Lingard, 2008). Developing Warde's (2004) discussion, Bourdieu's outline of practice highlighted three interconnected relationships. First, practice is the execution of an activity, e.g. running a policy review or implementing the recommendations of a review's findings (Rawolle and Lingard, 2008). Second, practice is the nominalisation of a process, or the formal identification of an activity that provides it with social organisation, points of harmonisation and borders, e.g. the naming and establishment of specific policy reviews as with the 2004 OECD Review of Higher Education in Ireland. Third, practice was distinguished from theories about practice and is restricted by shorter cycles of time that provide it with structure, limits and meaning. The knowledge of the intentions or mind sets of other agents is peripheral to the association between agents' actions and their contribution to broader practice. The production of 'a practice', e.g. the negotiation of policy implementation with other agents, is not entirely rational due to time constraints and the other actions negotiated. Practices are public, open to critique from other agents and relational. The totality of Bourdieu's theoretical and methodological approach is relational as field, habitus and practice refer to a formation of 'bundles of relations' (Rawolle and Lingard, 2008:731). Patterns of practice produced by agents, individual and groups, are explained by the concepts of habitus and field.

3.3.2.2 Habitus

An agent's habitus is a system of schemes of perception, appreciation and actions which allows an agent:

...perform acts of practical knowledge, based on the identification and recognition of conditional, conventional stimuli to which they are predisposed to react (Bourdieu, 2000:138).

Habitus produces and is produced by the social world. Bourdieu used habitus to theorise practice without classifying rational mental state as the single origin of action and without drawing on the mind's ability to represent actions (Burkitt, 2002). Habitus allows for the associations between agents and practice embodied into social history. Habitus is a set of dispositions commonly held by individuals of a social group, accredited to the position of individuals in that group relative to the overall social structure (Ladwig, 1994). The concept of habitus is a sedimentation of the past, structure and culture in individual disposition to practice (Lingard *et al.*, 2005). It is a 'socio-genetic' concept, as it does not identify which parts of the mind or body are generative of particular practices but allows an agent (individually or collectively) to produce a practice (Rawolle and Lingard, 2008:731).

Bourdieu proposed that habitus can be 'controlled through awakening of consciousness and socioanalysis' (Bourdieu, 1990:116). Rawolle and Lingard (2008) drew upon Stensli (2006) who discussed policy habitus as a set of dispositions that arrange agents to produce practices related to policies. While habitus is an internalised structure that restrains the selection of actions and thought, it does not decide those (Myles, 1999). Habitus simply provides the principles which inform what an agent (as an individual,

organisation or state) should think or should decide to do. The concept of habitus helps to make sense of the concepts of field and capital and the complex process by which an agent is influenced by its environment. Bourdieu (1980) suggested that generally people acted reasonably and use logic, 'the logic of practice', to decide what to do. Habitus proposes what people should do or think, providing principles by which choices are made. However, people are not fully rational either. They act unreasonably. While this 'logic of practice' is a useful tool by which to construe the policy process, this suggested predisposition towards practice does not singularly exemplify the expression. As Rawolle and Lingard suggested, a critical disposition towards education policy does not on its own elucidate why agents, e.g. policy-makers, will selectively oppose or engage with different policies (2008).

Some argued that the globalisation of education can be construed as a neo-liberal agenda seeking for convergence amongst education policies and practices with negative effects (Bourdieu, 1998). However, education globalisation can help revisit and reconstruct value bases of policy production (Ozga and Lingard 2006). Using Bourdieu's concept of capital, Lingard *et al.* (2005) suggested that the amount of 'national capital' held by a nation within the global field is a determining factor in its resistance to autonomy. National capital can be composed of economic, political or cultural capital from that nation. The amount of national capital retained by a particular nation within these global fields contributes to the spaces of resistance and degree of autonomy for policy development within the nation. National capital is exemplified by a nation's workforce, by the quantity and quality of provision of education and the manifestation of economic, political

and cultural capital. As Rizvi and Lingard (2010) suggested that the Global South (i.e. the developing world) is positioned differently from the Global North (i.e. the developed world). In relation to the effects of education policy from the World Bank and other international agencies. National capital can mediate the amount to which nations are able to be what Appadurai (1996) called 'context generative' in respect of the global field. (Please see Section 3.2). With globalisation and its emergent global field, the sovereignty of a nation will be affected differently. The focus is not on the content of the extent of the sovereignty of a nation state visible in the form it takes in the global economy (Jayasuriya, 2001). Each state manages differently its 'national interests' and in this case a different capacity to manage its interests in higher education. Bourdieu highlighted the effects of policies produced by agencies external to the nation including the OECD and World Bank within different nations possessing varying amounts of national capital (1999b: 221).

3.3.2.3 Social Field

The environment in which an agent's habitus is expressed in practice is called the social field. The social environment is constituted with social fields in which agents produce practice, vie with each other and develop social capacities. Each social field provides a means to accrue and allocate field specific forms of capital, including social, symbolic, cultural and national capitals and mechanisms for the exchange of capital between fields (Bourdieu, 1986). These forms of capital are referred to as a 'transubstantiation' of economic capital (Rawolle and Lingard, 2008:732). Within 'fields', individuals fight for unequally distributed resources of 'capital'. Social fields conceptualise social arrangements as various quasi-autonomous fields informed by their own logic of practice, spanned by a

field of power, connected to the field of economics and a field of gender (Rizvi and Lingard, 2010). Bourdieu spoke of a university field, which:

... is, like any other field, the locus of a struggle to determine the conditions and the criteria of legitimate membership and legitimate hierarchy, that is, to determine which properties are pertinent, effective and liable to function as capital so as to generate the specific profits guaranteed by the field (Bourdieu, 1984:11).

To study a field, Bourdieu provided an account of the relations between agents within the field through the study of the field's practice. Such research involved identification of the practices associated with the field, classifying dominant and dominated agents in the field and measuring the different forms of capital agents possessed. He researched institutions to provide an account of the practices specific to the field, the operation of that particular field and the agents and forms of capital located within that field. These concepts require the concept of habitus to make sense of how beliefs, values and traditions affect the policy process. Social fields act as a magnetic attraction for agents, who are disposed to engage with a particular field, where their habitus is aligned. Bourdieu likened the concept of a field to a 'force field':

... containing people who dominate and people who are dominated' and suggests that there is a 'space in which the various actors struggle for the transformation or preservation of the field' (Bourdieu 1998: L 40-1).

Within any social grouping, there is a hierarchy of multiple, relatively autonomous fields with their respective laws of practice, power relations and hierarchies and the independence of the field is related to its ability to refine intervention from other fields. The agents of a field contend for power in the

interests of that field and mobilise their respective capitals in this struggle. The impact of a field on an agent is reliant on their habitus, their position in the specific field and the strength of the field in relation to other fields in which the agent engages. This raises questions about how a social field relates to policy practices and effects and how different fields co-exist and influence each other. While individuals possess a habitus embodying dispositions which arise from the external conditions and determining structures they experience, collectively the habitus of individuals affect institutions and even the national state, e.g. a policy maker in the European Commission (EC) brings the habitus of their own education, their work experience in a member state and their experience working at the EU institutions to bear on the policy process. Thus, their habitus becomes an emergent property, through the assembling of national traditions and the ideologies of the Commission. To make sense of the effects of the Commission, the unique habitus of those working in the Commission is important. Thus, the Commission is more than just the assembly of different national ideologies. To understand the nuances of this, the utilisation of Bourdieu's concepts is cogent.

3.3.2.4 Global Education Policy Field

Bourdieu's concept of a social field had primarily a national focus but Rawolle and Lingard (2008) suggested that the concept can be applied to social structures operating beyond the nation-state. Acknowledging that Bourdieu was mindful of the shortcomings of 'methodological nationalism', Lingard and Rawolle (2004) proposed the concept of a social field as a physical metaphor which can be related with global relations. The global education policy field is:

.... a space of policy practices, in which agents respond to different sets of global policy pressures, in the form of global economic fields and international politics (Rawolle and Lingard, 2008:736)

Lingard *et al.* (2005) suggested that education policy is a field, consisting of multiple levels and including a global dimension characterised by the power of international agencies, as outlined. These networks sit and interact within a global educational policy field. Within this dynamic the national fields of power in the education policy field have become more heteronomous and are considered part of the economic policy field (Maton, 2005). Lingard *et al.* (2005) proposed that consumption by economic policy since the 1990's, has reshaped the educational policy field. As above, there are strengthening relations between economic and educational policy. Educational policy appears to be less independent and driven by an economic agenda advocated by supranational agencies. Nation states developed mechanisms in relation to the process of globalisation through various interactions with the emergent logical education field. Rawolle and Lingard (2008) argued that in a post-Westphalian stage of global politics and international relations, such global policy fields emerged, effecting and instigating a response from (rather than replacing) nation states. What appears to determine the nation's response is the extent of national capital which a nation had and drew upon to mediate the global field. This assumes that the nation (i.e. national government and its agencies) were the locus of origin for public policies in education.

3.3.2.5 Other Bourdieuan Tools

The literature discusses two other Bourdieuan tools. First Rawolle (2005) suggested cross-field effects, which outlines policy effects sensitive to the role

played by different fields in the production of policy practices. Where policy is proposed as a policy field, agents operating in other fields must find relevance in particular policy practices to allow cross-field effects to be generated and the habitus of these agents must dispose them towards policy practices. Second, Bourdieu's concept of symbolic violence was highlighted as invisible and imperceptible violence to those who fall victim to it. An effect of this symbolic domination is to shape habitus, which is enshrined in the dispositions which yield practical sense and organise an agent's vision of the world under the level of consciousness. These concepts were less useful in addressing this thesis's research question. Symbolic violence relates largely to unconscious modes of social domination which includes actions with discriminatory implications, e.g. in gender domination. Cross-field effects relate mostly to the mediated effects of policy processes. Bourdieu's 'conceptual triad' was the key ensemble of interconnected theoretical tools most relevant to this topic.

Rawolle and Lingard (2008) suggested that methodological principles and data collection using these tools is the research dilemma facing a Bourdieuan-located study of policy. They acknowledged the difficulty deriving methodological principles from the 'conceptual triad' as education policy practices are influenced by the policy field and other fields, e.g. the fields of higher education and politics. For the concept of a policy field to be significant for policy research in education, they recommended the development of additional conceptual tools, including the global policy field. Chapter 4 outlines how these academic tools were mobilised to collect data.

3.3.2.6 Critique of Bourdieu

Bourdieu's tools are important for empirical investigation (Lukes, 2005; Lingard, 2006). While Lukes acknowledged the interplay between a society and the physical, physiological and chemical functioning of the body which Bourdieu suggested, it requires greater investigation. Lukes questioned its theoretical contribution by wondering if it is 'more than a suggestive metaphor' (Lukes, 2005:143) and queried the extent to which tacit and practical represented knowledge can set bounds to 'discursive' learning and the transformation of the self. The concepts of habitus and field are useful but might be construed as nebulous and tenuous until such questions are addressed.

While Bourdieu's theory provides a coherent account of practices specific to the field which lends itself well to the study of education policy, it does not sufficiently take account of agency or the individual. Sociology has experienced a revival in the interest of institutional analysis and there is a tradition of institutional analysis since Marx, Weber and Durkheim (Peters, 2005). While policy sociology has not focused particularly on the role of individuals, political sociology contributes to micro-level analysis. Institutionalism recognised an institution as a structural feature of a society, be it formal or informal. 'New institutionalism', initiated by March and Olsen (1984), explores the autonomy of individuals within formal or informal institutions. An institution transcends individuals to involve a group of individuals in some interaction which is predictable based upon the relationship between these actors (Peters, 2005). Peters highlighted that institutions vary in the extent of predictability they require and suggests that

universities appear to vary in their amount of predictability for class hours but little else (2005:16).

Rational choice theory and institutional theory provide different approaches to institutions which are underpinned by the logic of rational choice. Rational choice theory was pervasive in the literature and merits a short discussion. Rational choice theory is not a unified concept and there are a number of schools related to it (see Peters, 2005:48). March and Olsen recognised that while a simple conceptualisation of rational choice theory would not perceive a role for institutions, there was merit to theorising formal and informal structures as a means of channeling individual rational action. The rational choice theory approach provided an analytic connection between individuals and their institutions through the institution's capacity to influence the preferences of individuals and to shape the incentives available to organizational members (Peters, 2005). Scharpf (1997) highlighted the role of 'actor-centred institutionalism' as a means of utilising rational assumptions for understanding institutions and the role of 'institutional rational choice'. Peters (2005) highlighted that these approaches conceptualise an institution as a collection of rules and incentives which establish the conditions for bounded rationality and a 'political space' where many interdependent political actors operate. In these approaches, an individual actor is likely to operate to maximise their personal utilities but their options are constrained as they are operating within the rules set by one or more institutions. While this form of institutionalism demonstrates an appreciation of the extent to which political life operates within institutions, it can be critiqued for its difficulty in falsifying the predictions emanating from this theory and to find a context in which individuals do not act

rationally in response to incentives. Institutionalism has not been extensively used to underpin this study as it appears to capture less successfully the nature of influences on the policy process. Bourdieu (1988) suggested that social action rarely has anything to do with rational choice. Conversely, the concept of habitus is useful in reviewing the policy process as it helps explain the unconscious actions of agents as a:

....form of knowledge that does not require consciousness of an intentionality without intention, of a practical mastery of the regularities of the world that allows one to anticipate its future without having to pose it as such' (Bourdieu, 1988:783-4).

A further consideration regarding Bourdieu's approach is its unresolved determinism. Habitus is considered to be neither subjectivistic nor objectivistic but combines elements of both. This approach rejects the suggestion that an actor can be 'free and [a] wilful power to constitute meaning of the situation' by way of 'projecting the ends aiming at its transformation' (Bourdieu, 1977: 73). It is this which legitimatises Jenkin's (1992) critique that Bourdieu educes determinism and a label of tight structuralism. The theme of determinism appears to be unresolved by Bourdieu, particularly regarding class and social reproduction. He intended that his concepts, e.g. habitus or cultural capital, are not deterministic, yet there appears to be an inherent determinism. He suggested that determinism can be overcome but there are a dearth of examples of victory over determinism. Subsequent writers, such as Nash (1990; 2003), acknowledge the fatalistic determinism of Bourdieu. If Bourdieu really wanted to promote a non-deterministic concept, such as cultural reproduction, he would have provided a greater mass of counter examples. In light of such determinism, the concept of pluralism is reviewed below. While Bourdieu rejected the

suggestion that man can be free and exert wilful power to constitute, the notion of pluralism embraces a wide range of social interest and interest groups in the modern system of politics. Pluralism is frequently associated with the 'endorsement of different ways of knowing and of being' (McLennan, 1995: 3).

3.3.3 Pluralism

Bourdieu's tools highlighted how a purely policy sociology approach is not enough to understand the complexities of this topic. Drawing upon pluralism and policy networks allows for a more coherent exploration of the topic. A pluralist society is one which is based on different principles, including the principles that the state exists to protect and serve the self-governing associations and that the state's powers would be limited by its function. Thus, such a state would recognise the essentially plural nature of all free social organisation (Hirst, 1997). Pluralism has been a contested concept and had fallen out of fashion in academic circles in the 1980's (Jordan, 1990). The concept is very diffuse and evidenced by multiple ideas about interest groups, loosely related together by a pluralist tag (Jordan, 1990).

Pluralism is reinforced by a disparate literature on decision-making and particularly incrementalism. This incremental approach set out by Braybrooke and Lindblom (1963) and Wildavsky (1984) built on the notion of multiplicity of participants, each with some distinctive position and political resources. Therefore, the desirability of a society with dispersed resources was increased by the claimed virtues of the incrementalist methods, giving a means to make decisions by learning from experience. The fragmentation of

policy-making to a multiplicity of strategic problem solvers is seen as the key to coordination. Pluralism began with the concern that there was a need to limit the 'all-powerful state' concept but Jordan suggested that the relationship is a more retrospective recognition than a positive steering of modern research by historical precedent (1990). Jordan suggested that Dahl's key tenet of political resources in a pluralist society was their unequal dispersion. Dahl suggested that many governmental actions can be explained as the result of struggles among groups with differing interests and varying resources of influence. Dahl did not label this as pluralism even though this was later labelled as 'modern pluralism' (Dahl, 1961).

3.3.3.1 Perspectives on Pluralism

Jordan (1990) observed aspects of pluralism emerging from the literature. Firstly, studies provide empirical evidence that power was decentralised and fragmented in western political systems. There was a consequential assumption that groups with interests which were overlooked would and could have attention paid to their protests and eventually; there would be winners and losers. Such a dispersion of power was encouraged in those political systems to be considered as democratic. It was assumed that the practice of a political system was based upon acknowledgement of the process of policy development. Recognising political outcomes in disparate policy sectors reflected different power holders and processes in the respective sector is a fundamental premise of pluralism. Equally, evidence of the assumption that the interaction of interests would supply an alternative to the 'general will' as the source of legitimate authority was key. Pluralism is also associated with the instability of pluralistic bargaining processes which combines participants to the process.

Pluralism has to be viewed from different perspectives depending on the historical context (Mc Lennan, 1993). Pluralism is a 'generic concept' with no fixed theory or precise tradition. McLennan suggested that pluralism is not just one interpretative perspective but rather a plurality of them (McLennan, 1995). It is an important theory of the social sciences rather than a clear school of thought or a body of theory. Essentially, there are three schools of pluralism: methodological, socio-cultural and political pluralism. First, methodological pluralism refers to problems philosophically and interpretatively, in assessing varied claims to knowledge about the social world. This form conceives both the existence and validity of: multiple appropriate research methods, multiple substantive interpretative paradigms, many truths and many worlds. Second, socio-cultural pluralism requires observance of one of several claims that there are: many types of important social relations, many subcultures, multiple selves and multiple identities. Finally, political pluralism offers assurances to diversity within the polity to recognise socio-cultural difference, the facilitation of difference and the representation of difference in all decision-making arrangements.

In discussing the plurality of societal interests, corporatism is related to pluralism and seen as a corrective action to what was recognised as conventional pluralist political science (Jordan, 1990:298). Schmitter saw pluralism as relating to a large number of competing groups, whereas with corporatism, there is a small number of groups, each in a specially privileged relationship with the state (Schmitter, 1974). Corporatism is further discussed in Section 3.3.6. This latter concept of pluralism relates better to universities given their relationship with the state. (See Chapter 2 for the relationship between Irish universities and state).

3.3.4. Associative Democracy

Truman suggested that the similarities between the interests retained by a group or an individual mediate conflict and was central to associative democracy (Truman, 1971). This overlapping membership was proposed as a feature which limits extremism (Jordan, 1990). In the current democratic regime, citizens could disengage from the political process and alternative political methods would give more people the full benefit of social and economic citizenship (Hirst, 1997). Hirst's concept of associative democracy was a source of ideas about communities and a critique of New Labour's bureaucratic tendency towards centralisation in the UK. Hirst prescriptively and descriptively suggested associative democracy as an alternative between socialism and capitalism which extended and intensified democratic control, resulting in more informed decisions and yielding more effective governance. Associative democracy redresses problems of governance by providing a means of coordination that can work in more complex situations. It does not attempt to abolish representative government but it reacts to the question of how to democratise a post-liberal organisational society, as it aimed to promote governance through democratically legitimated voluntary organisations. This decentralisation of governance through voluntary self-governing associations allowed individuals to engage under the subsidiary governments they selected for specific purposes, providing them with some voice and thus their own form of accountability. Hirst's ideas regarding associative democracy are very similar to that of policy networks which are also based upon the distribution of power.

An associationalist approach can be summarised into three tenets. First, the organisation of social affairs should be transferred from the state to

democratic, voluntary and self-governing associations. It attempts to combine the individual choice of liberalism with the broad public provision of collectivism, decreasing the direct state activity, though not at the expense of social provision. Associations would be publicly funded for functions, e.g. education. This approach aimed to reinforce government in and through civil society: with civil society adopting many of the attributes of the public sphere. This reduces the function of both public and private hierarchical organisations, promoting accountability through the democratic self-government of associations and the devolution of functions locally. The second proposition was that political authority should be decentralised and perform few functions. The third proposition is that the economy should be organised on mutualist lines, by means of non-profit financial institutions and co-operative firms in which both investors and workers have a major say in their governance.

Hirst suggested that there are three types of current governance: imperative control, exchange and negotiated control. Networks, partnerships and trust relationships were part of negotiated control. It is because of the multiplicity of forms of negotiated governance that it made them amalgamate into a single model (Hirst, 1997). Hirst argued, in response to the new institutional architecture demanded by modern society, schemes for democratisation and reform cross both civil society and the state, as they explicitly tackle the broader issues of the governance powers of all organisations, not just their remedies to government and to the state. Thus, Hirst believed that civil society must be made 'public' and its organisations accepted as governing powers over which citizens with significant affected interests would have a say proportionate to their involvement (Hirst, 1997:12-13).

3.3.5 Civil Society

Civil society was conceptualised as the arena of non-state institutions and practices which experience high autonomy. It received renewed interest in the early 1990's as Central and Eastern Europe was restructured. Civil society theorists, e.g. Kumar (1993) prescribed and described a role for citizenship in society which contributes to the state. It was a social organisation which emanates from commerce. Entities, e.g. trade unions and professional associations, constitute civil society as their influence surpasses the immediate sphere of work, linking their members to broader social and political purposes (Kumar, 1993:383). Civil society classically expressed the development of civilisation as a:

... social order of citizenship, one where men (rarely women) regulate their relationships and settle their disputes according to a system of laws; where 'civility' reigns, and citizens take an active part in public life (Kumar, 1993:381).

Kumar (1993: 381) cited deTocqueville that politics spreads a habit and taste for association, which paves the way for political ones. Subsequently, politics precedes civil society. The primary conditions for a successful civil society of independent association and an active civic life include the establishment of a democratic polity and a public sphere of political debate and activity (Keane, 1993:391). Keane believed that these conditions must be established to revitalise civil society from the top (1993). While the concept of civil society suggests a re-engagement of citizens in public life, Keane (1998) noted that it does not provide an answer to the dilemma of the location of democracy and social justice in the institutions of civil society. Kumar agreed that civil society is not a panacea and while it recognises diversity and

pluralism, its divisions and restlessness continue to be a source of inequality and instability (1993:387).

The concepts of pluralism, associative democracy and civil society somewhat capture the diffusion of power in democratic societies. They highlight the governance modes associated with representative government and some of the considerations arising from different societal interests. Recently, the concept of policy networks also emerged to explain the changes in governance.

3.3.6 Governance and Policy Networks

Various definitions of governance emerged, as a result of the state's changing role post-1980s. In the 1990s, the terms 'governance', 'hollowing-out' and 'new governance' emerged in Western Europe (Kijjn, 2002). The term 'hollowing out of the state' suggested the growth of governance decreased the capacity of the core executive to act successfully, making it less dependent on a command operation code and more reliant on diplomacy (Rhodes, 2007:1248). The new forms of governance, including policy networks, relate to developments in the UK since the mid twentieth century, while the concept of 'hollowing out' is more associated with the last two decades of that century. New modes of governance were based upon non-coercive processes, involving the agreement of participants through collective deliberation (Bruno *et al.*, 2006). Policy networks were an effective way of managing complex problems in health and education (Rhodes, 2006). The existing literature regarding policy networks, in the UK, was useful. However, Rhodes (2007:1258) acknowledged that a seminal work like '*Understanding Governance*' was insular and difficult to compare across

countries. Network theory is reviewed here but little has been written about policy networks in the Irish context generally.

Policy network theory can be useful to make sense of the policy process at European level. Currently, the literature does not discuss how policy networks from a small nation operate at local, national or European level. Smaller states behave differently in the EU than larger states and this affects their decision-making process (Thorhallsson, 2000; 2006). Small states in Western Europe are distinctive in three ways. First, these states are different in their degree of economic openness and this reinforces their corporatist arrangements. Second, this corporatist difference is evidenced by the three significant features of corporatism. Corporatism is

... an ideology of social partnership, a centralised and concentrated system of economic interest groups, an uninterrupted process of bargaining among all of the major political actors across different sectors of policy (Katzenstein, 1985:80).

Finally, corporatism produces distinct party systems as evidenced in small European states. On the basis of these distinctions, one would expect that policy networks would operate differently in smaller nations than in larger nation-states.

3.3.6.1 Defining policy networks

The term governance is about the changing form and role of the state in advanced industrial societies (Bevir and Rhodes, 2003). Governance can be defined as the means by which an activity, or activities, is directed, so it delivers an acceptable range of outcomes according to established social standards (Hirst, 1997:3). This useful definition does not highlight the

concept of governance as a recent development nor does it account for how these activities operate. Accordingly, governance was defined as:

... a change in the meaning of government, referring to a new process of governing; or a *changed* condition of ordered rule; the new method by which society is governed. I employ a stipulative definition; it refers to self-organising, interorganizational networks... (Rhodes, 1997b: 43)

This suggested that governance refers to the establishment of self-organising, interorganisational networks which are characterised by interdependence, resource exchange, rules of the game and significant autonomy from the machinery of the state (Rhodes, 1997a:15). To understand governance and the response to it in individual countries, discussion should be located in a historical context. Network theory pervaded the governance literature in the last two decades and was developed to capture the sectoral collection emerging in response to the increasing diversion of resources allocation for political action among public and private actors (Falkner, 2000:100). Concurrently, the scope of state intervention targets, decentralisation and fragmentation increased and were matched by greater intervention and participation in decision-making by a growing range of social and political actors. Policy networks were characterised as an integrated hybrid structure of political governance with the characteristic capacity for grouping different combinations of bureaucracy, market, community or corporatist association as integrative logics (Falkner 2000: 100).

Van Waarden (1992) acknowledged that the idea of a network described the nature of a policy field and the institutional structures through which policy is formulated and implemented, demonstrating the ways in which

interrelated organisations can function collectively. Rhodes suggested that the term 'policy network' is used in three ways; as a description of governments at work, as a theory for analysing government policy making, and as a prescription for reforming public management. Rhodes proposed that a policy network was one of a cluster of concepts focusing on government links with and dependence on, other state and societal actors including issue networks, iron triangles, etc. (2006). Policy networks are formal institutional and informal linkages between governmental and other actors founded upon shared, negotiated, beliefs and interests in policy making and implementation. Policy networks are generally secure patterns of social relations between interdependent actors, structured around policy problems and/or policy programmes (Klijn and Koppenjan, 2000).

Some dismissed the concept of policy networks as mere metaphor but evidence suggests that this is disingenuous. Howlett (2002), and Toke and Marsh (2003), amongst others, demonstrated that a network was not merely a metaphor to describe actor interrelationships without any predictable impact on policy outcomes and illustrates that networks matter. Other critics suggested that policy networks analysis is exhausting intellectually (Dowding, 1995). Despite this and suggestions that it was overly descriptive and a little tautological conceptually, it is a concept that endures. Others have suggested that the complexity of terminology and its interchanging nature defines 'a paradigm shift' (Raab, 2001:70).

3.3.6.2 Concepts and Characteristics of Policy Networks

Policy network theory has developed a unique structure, premised on the assumption that policy is made in complex interaction processes between a

number of actors which occur within networks of interdependent actors (Klijn and Koppenjan, 2000: 139). The actors are mutually dependent because they need each other's resources to achieve their own individual goals. Policy emerges from the interactions and bargaining between interdependent actors. It is the shared values and norms which bind together the complex relationships and trust is a necessary precursor to cooperative behaviour and inevitably, the existence of the network (Rhodes, 2007). As the network evolves, rules are developed which control behaviour and resource distribution. Actors remain relatively autonomous; they have their own objectives. Although governments are considered to be actors, they are not seen as equal to other actors due to their unique resources and objectives. This also limits their possibilities (Hill and Hupe, 2002:79).

There are broadly three lenses used to explore policy networks. First, for those who recognised policy networks as interest intermediation, the term describes government policy making and refers to the mediation of interests, interorganisational analysis and governance (Marsh and Rhodes, 1992). Here policy networks were classified as a meso-level concept linking the micro level of analysis. It dealt with the role of interest and government in making policy decisions and also the macro level of analysis which includes wider questions regarding the distribution of power in modern society. Second, networks might be viewed as interorganisational analysis. The European literature on networks focuses less on subgovernments and more on interorganisation analysis (Rhodes, 2006). This approach emphasised the structural relationship between political institutions as the key element in a policy network rather than the interpersonal relations between individuals in those institutions. Here, the key actors are formal organisations not

individuals. Currently, there is not much produced regarding such network (Rhodes, 2006:249). Finally, there is discussion of networks as governance. The roots of policy network analysis lie in the analysis of the sharing of power between public and private actors usually trade unions, business and the government (Atkinson and Coleman, 1992). More recently there was concern with governance by and through networks, on trends in the relationship between state and civil society government rather than on policy making in specific arenas. Governance is a term used more widely than government, with public resources and services provided by any permutation of government and the private and voluntary sectors. There were many accounts documenting the move from government by a unitary state to governance by and through networks. The discussion in this thesis will view networks largely as interest intermediation and governance.

The theory proposed by Rhodes was influential regarding the categorisation of policy networks and suggested that policy networks were organised along a continuum from policy communities at one end, to professional networks, intergovernmental networks and producer networks to issue networks at the other end (Marsh and Rhodes, 1992; Rhodes *et al.*, 1996). Marsh and Rhodes's (1992) model of policy networks emerged as the dominant typology and distinguished between closed and stable policy communities, and loose and open issue networks as the two polar ends of a multi-dimensional continuum. The term policy network encompasses all classifications. The characteristics of both groups focused on the dimensions of membership, integration, resources and power (Falkner, 2000). Networks can vary along a continuum according to the closeness of the relationships in them and can join together into communities and communities can collapse into networks.

There may be situations where communities are more likely to exist than networks and vice versa (Rhodes, 2006). Policy communities are at the other end of the continuum and involve characteristics such as a limited number of participants with some groups consciously excluded, frequent and high-quality interaction between all community members on all policy issue matters, consistency in values/membership, and policy outcomes which persist over time. There was consensus regarding the ideology, values and broad policy preferences shared with all participants in the network. The concept of an issue network is also utilised when many members of the network and resources are distributed (Rhodes *et al.*, 1996). Here, the interaction varies in frequency and intensity and the most common relationship is consultative. The issue network is a network of those interested in some specific policy and the network continually produces ideas for new policy initiatives.

3.3.6.3 Defining Policy Networks?

In defining policy networks, there was no pervasive agreement on how to define policy networks. In many cases, labels have been applied without definition and various authors used different labels to describe similar phenomenon (Van Warden, 1992). Some have acknowledged that it is hard to use the concept to move beyond description into explanation (Jordan and Schubert, 1992; Blom-Hansen, 1997). Rhodes suggested the focus should be on the substance rather than the definition. The advantages of the network concept is that it stresses the interrelatedness and interdependencies, between separate actors without assuming that these are integrated around a set of common objectives as implied by the systems concept (Hanf and O'Toole, 1992:177). Hanf and O'Toole proposed that a network as an

instrument or structure through which individuals and organisations act, in situations in which they are dependent on the inputs or contributions of others, before they can realise objectives that they cannot realise alone. In the first case, network analysis described the context of and the factors leading to joint decision making. In the second case, it focused on the structure and process through which joint action is organised and managed.

3.3.6.4 Network Behaviour and Agents

The British body of literature suggested policy networks were important for successful policy formation and implementation, which was why governments seek to foster policy networks and policy communities (Hill and Hupe, 2002:60). Drawing on Jordan (1990) and Richardson (2000), Hill and Hupe (2002) identified four primary reasons for this, as policy networks can: facilitate a consultative style of government; reduce policy conflict and make it possible to depoliticise issues; make policy-making predictable; and relate well to the departmental organisation of government. Many case studies demonstrated that policy networks routinise relationships: to promote continuity and stability (Jordan, 1990; Jordan and Schubert, 1992). Some commentators recognised policy networks as a source of policy inertia (Marsh and Rhodes, 1992). A further reason why policy networks were important is that they can decide which issues will be included and excluded from the policy agenda (Rhodes, 1997a). While these reasons legitimate the role of policy networks, there was critique that network analysis does not and cannot explain change (Rhodes, 2006). Problems emerged for the network state regarding the management of diffuse accountability and reduced coordination. Rhodes (2006: 439) cited Mulgan who suggested that buck-passing was likely in networks because responsibility was divided and

that the reach of political leaders was less. The issue of responsibility and the accountability of individual agents in policy networks raise questions about network behaviour.

There were two schools of thought on policy networks and the difference between them is in how they seek to explain network behaviour: is it primarily power dependent or rational actor? (Rhodes, 2006). The power dependent theory advanced policy networks as sets of resource-dependent organisations associated with power dependence relationships. Consequently, actors used strategies within the 'rules of the game' to manage the exchange process as the behaviour in these networks are game-like, bound by faith and controlled by rules established by the network participants. These networks have a large degree of independence from government. Conversely, those belonging to the rational choice school explained policy networks management by combining rational choice and new institutionalism to produce actor-centred institutionalism (Rhodes, 2006). The rational choice theory saw actions as rational strategies for attaining the actor's preference and as a result it reduced the motives of political actors to self-interest (Downs, 1957). Scharpf (1993) argued that institutions are systems of rules that structure the actors' opportunities (both individual and corporate) to attain their preferences. These networks tend to be located in a single institutional setting where public and private actors interact. As outlined in Section 3.3.2.6, the rational actor approach suggested actions were always made consciously which is discounted by Bourdieu. Rhodes recognised that both schools have differences in both method and theory and discussion of each school are outside the remit of this discussion

as they do not add to the ensuing discussion of policy networks (Rhodes, 2006).

There were shortcomings regarding policy network theory and explanation of policy outcomes (Blom-Hansen, 1997). There is common critique that policy networks theory best described policy continuity rather than policy change (Richardson, 2000; Toke and Marsh, 2003:233). To understand how policy networks affected outcomes, the dialectical relationship between the network and the context of its location and agents are acknowledged. Policy outcomes impact upon the policy network in three ways: first, the outcome may lead to a change in the network membership or the resource balance within it; second, policy outcomes may impact on the social structure that can weaken the position of a specific interest in relation to a network; and third, policy networks affect agents. To understand network transformation and policy outcomes, a model is required which recognises the dialectical relationships between structure and agents, network and context and network and outcomes (Toke and Marsh, 2003). Marsh and Smith identified three dialectical (i.e. interactive and iterative) relationships within the structure of policy networks:

- (1) the structure of the network and the participants in the network,
- (2) the network and its political and socio-economic context and
- (3) the policy network and the outcome

To understand the relationship between policy networks and policy outcomes, Marsh and Smith suggested these relationships must be examined (2000). They proposed that policy networks are structures that both confine and assist agents: they define the actor's roles and also shape the issues which are debated and how these issues are handled. These networks have

sets of rules and also have organisational imperatives. In reviewing policy network structure, the role of agents as agents matter. It is agents who act; structures do not act. The agents select particular policy options; agents argue, negotiate and disband networks. Thus, Marsh and Smith suggested agents have the capacity to bargain within network structures. The network concept helps explain formal institutional arrangements and the complex informal relationships in the policy process (Kenis and Schneider, 1991:27).

3.3.6.5 Policy Networks in the EU

Before grappling with the micro level issues of policy networks, their dynamics at a macro level are reviewed. Policy network analysis is a powerful analytical tool regarding the EU. Few deny that governance by networks are an essential feature of the EU (Peterson, 2004). There is a range of networking semi-sustained by the European Commission (Lawn, 2006) which will be discussed later. Transnational networks also were a feature of EU policy making (Peterson, 2004). The idea of networks and their management underpin the Commission's strategy for managing multi-level governance. Rhodes (2006) suggested that the theory of policy networks has virtues as a tool for describing and analysing EU policy-making including the vocabulary and techniques for recounting complex organisational linkages. While policy-making in the EU is varied, there are stable patterns of policy-making and identifiable governance structures. Many analyse how the EU impacted on pre-existing national politics, policies, or even polities. Analyses focus on how decisions on integration, once taken, feed back into the national arena and the focus has moved from integration to governance to 'Europeanization' (Schafer, 2006).

The EU policy process is best characterised as a multi-level, multi-agenda, multi-venue game (Richardson, 2000). It provides many access points to policy professionals and different interest groups. The European venue was attractive for those excluded from national policy communities, as the characteristics of EU policy did not seem conducive to the systematic emergence of traditional policy community politics or to established policy networks as a system of governance. The EU governance system was described as pursuing uncertain agendas, shifting networks and complex coalitions (Richardson, 2000). The model of order and control which exemplified the policy process suggested it is at variance with the changing nature of policy making at national and supranational levels in Europe. In reality, it is often more fluid. While there are policy communities and networks exhibiting stability, exclusiveness and control of political agendas, there are also those lacking policy stability and control.

Intergovernmental bargaining and national interests have dominated policy-making as the Commission's power of initiative is often constrained by 'real politique'. However, supra-national institutions could change both policy and relationships and must be included among the factors which both constrain and provide opportunities for national policy networks, as well as fostering the emergence of trans-national policy networks (Marsh and Rhodes, 1992). A number of factors facilitate the conditions which supported governance through policy networks at EU level (Marsh and Rhodes, 1992). First, the national style of policy-making impacts upon the prevalence of networks as they are more likely to occur where they are an established feature of national systems. The approach presumes some pluralism, the relative separation of public and private actors, and complex policies

needing many resources which are not concentrated in the nation. The degree of resource dependence could influence success of policy networks. Second, resource dependence is high when the policy sector is defined by the institutional fragmentation of multi-level governance or when the policy is complex and/or when the Commission needed a high level of information and expertise. The dependence of the Commission on other actors is high as it is small in scale, with limited expertise. Thirdly, the characteristics of the policy area could influence the extent of a policy network approach as the scope to which the Commission and its Directorate General play the lead role. Equally, the degree to which the policy is 'low politics', the policy process is routinised and/or politicised to influence the policy network structure. Rhodes also suggested that policy networks were more likely to occur when the Commission depends on other actors for implementing its policy. Policy networks always require the aggregation of interests and the Commission needs to aggregate interests as a stratagem to counter institutional fragmentation and co-ordinate policies. Finally, functional representation and representation of economic and professional interests through networks is a Commission source of information, guidance and legitimation. These different factors help to make sense of policy networks in different sectors including higher education.

3.3.6.6 The OECD and Policy Networks

The role of policy networks in the EU appeared more prolific in the literature than the discussion of networks at the OECD. Despite this, the OECD's organisation is also highly fluid and its associations with individual policy advisers and other international organisations merit attention when reviewing the topic of policy networks in the education sphere. The literature acknowledged networks at OECD. However, there was little analysis offered

of these networks. This may be because the EU is a recognised governance structure by the nation state and the OECD is not. Henry *et al.* (2001) highlight the OECD concurrently as a geographic agency, a sphere of influence, a policy-making forum and a network of policy makers. The OECD is essentially a non-governmental organisation. It connects with countries at two levels; that of the government and that of research communities. It can be described as partially non-governmental, enveloping alternative networks of influence (Taylor *et al.*, 1997). According to Waters, the OECD establishes a 'complex web of ungovernable relationships' (1995:113).

The OECD is steered by a secretariat which oversees research and administrative functions. It is currently strengthening its links with newly emergent nations. At the same time, it addresses a common problem faced by countries, regarding the nation state as an adequate analytical unit (Taylor *et al.*, 1997). To this end, the OECD has produced a number of thematic analyses which are designed to promote links with sub-national units. Taylor *et al.* suggested that these reviews can potentially undermine national management of the policy agenda. In its research capacity, the secretariat of the OECD is linked to its own pool of consultants and experts in addition to government forums. The former was often used for policy research and advice. As Taylor *et al.* (1997) suggested the extent of governments' adoption of OECD advice is a moot point.

In addition to the OECD's use of consultants, experts and forums, it has also been involved with a network of international organisations with an interest in education policy. This network includes UNSECO, the World Bank, the

Commonwealth Secretariat, International Labour Organisation and the EU. A representative from the EU on the Governing Council and other fora of the OECD was a symbolic of this trend as is the tendency for informed OECD staff members to take consultancies with the EU and other European tendering agencies (Taylor *et al.*, 1997). Taylor *et al.* suggested that this constitutes an overlapping membership of senior public servants, policy advisers and policy makers. Further discussion of the OECD and its structure is available in Section 3.4.1.1.

3.3.6.7 Policy Networks and the Micro Level

This discussion has focused upon the macro mechanisms of policy networks and has not yet accounted for the role of the individual within the network. Blom Hansen (1997) suggested that policy network analysis must incorporate an explicit model of the actor if explanations are to be convincing. Dowding (1995) and Scharpf (1993) suggested that policy network analysis may be strengthened by being combined with a micro-level underpinning, derived from a rational choice nature. Raab (2001) agreed that the study of action and human agency contributed to understanding of policy networks by opening up the making, maintenance, and unmaking of stable patterns and the institutions to analysis, comparison and further theorisation. Network analysis sought to place social analysis in the notion of an internal process and the inherent dynamics between interdependent human beings (Raab, 2001). Rhodes conflated the terms 'micro-level behaviour', and 'personal network' and in rejecting the last he appears to be rejecting the first (Raab, 2001). Raab proposed that by taking the micro-level of personal networks seriously and analysing participant behaviour and values, the problem of the relationship between action and structure is presented and this is

fundamental to understanding what goes on within policy networks. Understanding human agency and trust, as a micro-analytic strategy, is required for research on meso-level interactions or 'networking' (Raab, 2001). There was little exploration of how actors understand the networks in which they operate (Rhodes, 2002). Toke and Marsh (2003) highlighted that Marsh and Smith (2000) did not distinguish between groups and individuals as agents and this needs to be clarified. Clarification between the two is required. The role of the individual and organisation at all three levels, micro/local, meso/national and macro/European requires review. The dialectical relationship is more complex because there is a policy network and agent (individual and/or organisation) in policy networks at local/institutional, national, global and European levels. Reconciling these in a single theory of networks or governance is challenging.

3.3.6.8 Decentring Policy Networks

Some argued for the decentred study of networks, suggesting a need for a shift from institution to individual and a re-focusing on the social construction of policy networks through the ability of individuals to create meaning (Bevir and Rhodes, 2003; Bevir and Richards, 2009 a&b). Bevir and Richards argued that the literature on policy networks relied on the imposition of typologies to explain the disparate nature of networks (2009b). They argued that there is no essentialist account but only accounts of the participants and observers involved with the network. Equally, literature on policy networks suggested macro-accounts and the provision of comprehensive theories, providing a bottom-up rather than a top-down view. Bevir and Richards (2009b) offered a decentred approach which challenges state-centric or 'top-down' accounts, treating policy networks as

the product of individuals acting on their beliefs and the stories they tell. This emphasised the diversity of actions and practices emerging from the different beliefs and traditions inspiring agents. This challenged the literature by rejecting a comprehensive theory of networks; arguing that structures do not establish the character of networks and contesting the suggestion that networks are defined by essential properties. A decentred approach supported a bottom-up perspective based upon meanings and persuades researchers to explore the actors' beliefs within specific networks. Network behaviour was grounded in the beliefs and preferences of individual actors, and explained using the aggregate concepts of tradition and dilemma.

Bevir and Richards (2009b:140) proposed a study of how diverse actors confine what others can do in ways that weaken the intentions of those others, e.g. by seeking to show how the central executive exerts pressure on local actors to pursue specific policies, or how local actors are able to draw on their traditions to defy the policies promoted by the core executive. The beliefs and actions of an actor create the network's character, instead of the beliefs and actions of individuals being determined by their position. Such a decentred theory encouraged exploration of the ways in which networks are made and reconstituted through a specific individual's activities (Bevir and Richards, 2009a). The decentred approach provided a micro-theory based on individuals acting with beliefs and desires constructed against traditions and problems. Admittedly, while useful, this approach incited criticism over its capacity to provide accounts of power, authority and the state.

Bevir and Richards (2009a:8) used the idea of situated agency to overcome the impasse between collective accounts of practice, using meanings as

products of discourse, epistemes or other aspects of the relationship as symbols of its composition, and resultant from contingency and particularity. In using situated agency, they distinguished between autonomy and agency and argued that an autonomous individual could, in principle, have experiences, reason, adopt beliefs and act, outside all contexts. Conversely, an agent could reason and operate in different ways, even though they can do so only against the background of the contexts that influence them. A decentred theory did not dismiss agency with autonomy. This approach defended the capacity for agency and recognises the social context that influences it. Agency is not autonomous, it is situated. Bang and Sørensen's (1999) concept of the 'Everyday Maker' illustrates situated agency. In a system of governance, the 'Everyday Maker' focuses on concrete policy problems at the lowest level. The task of civic engagement was about researching the dynamic between autonomous and dependent relationships among elites and lay actors in networks within or beyond the nation state. Rhodes (2006), and Bevir and Rhodes (2009a) drew upon the work of Bang and Sørensen (1999) who focused on the social construction of networks where individuals display the capacity to create meaning.

The 'Everyday Maker' has the capacity to execute different roles in response to an increasing number of policy communities, issue networks, etc., and has to 'produce concrete outcomes' as political activity shifts from 'formal organising to more informal networking' (1999: 434). Bang and Sørensen (1999), labelled citizens 'Everyday Makers', who are individuals with an alternative approach and combine individuality and commonality in new dimensions of self-governance and co-governance. These offer a new challenge for democracy from below. They identified political action in the

social interaction of daily life. This decentred approach was useful as it constructed policy networks from the bottom-up based on the experience of those operating at micro level and implementing the policy. While this concept explains the individual's role in a network, the role of the individual outside of the network construct also requires review. This relationship becomes more complex when we look at how the individuals operate in response to a local network, and national and European levels.

Bevir and Richards (2009a) highlighted the role of different governmental traditions to understand and respond to governance as networks. They argued that networks construct and or reconstruct their own traditions. Individuals learn about a particular network or its constituent organisation through stories of characters and events. These traditions determined later performances which were products of both situated agency in a setting of tradition (Bevir and Richards, 2009a:10). Such an approach does not represent tradition as an unavoidable presence and accordingly underplays the role for situated agency. Thus, tradition is essential to the beliefs people come to hold or the actions they perform. Traditions are essentially a first influence on people and the content of tradition appears in subsequent actions if their situated agency has not led them to change it. Bevir and Richards discussed dominant state traditions to demonstrate this, distinguishing between Anglo-Saxon, Germanic and French traditions. This concept is similar to Bourdieu's concepts of habitus and capital.

Globalisation demands new ways to explore changes in governance in education. In this section, the conceptual tools used to underpin this research were outlined. Both Bourdieu's 'conceptual triad' and the theory of

policy networks provide useful instruments to explore the changes in the policy process of higher education policy. Bourdieu's concepts allow for research of the global economic market to tackle discussion of globalisation as a 'reified concept' and locate agency within current policy processes. While Bourdieu's concepts are useful, they are somewhat nebulous. The concept of policy networks are more tangible as they facilitate understanding of the diffuse nature of power within and outside of state structures. While policy networks are useful to operationalise fundamental concepts like pluralism and civil society, they do not provide a convincing research tool for the 'pays réel' (Neave, 2002) or the micro level of policy analysis. A decentred approach to policy networks potentially provides insight into policy networks at the levels of local governance, national and intergovernmental levels and into the black box of state governance (Bevir and Richards, 2009b). To develop this idea, it is important to see how policy network analysis can incorporate an explicit model of the actors involved in and between micro, meso and macro levels, if explanations of governance are to be convincing. There is also the opportunity to review how Bourdieu's concepts of habitus, capital and field can be utilised to understand how power is exerted in the policy process and can influence decentred policy networks. To further provide a conceptual foundation for the investigation of changes in governance at the research site, the governance of education is addressed.

3.4 Governance and Education

In the transition from government to governance, there is a global and European element associated with the new scalar politics of globalisation (Brenner, 2004; Dale, 2006). Brenner suggested that this 'rescaling of

statehood' has required the nation state to alter how it operates in the context of globalisation, though not necessarily involving its decline. Dale (2006) highlighted that states have relinquished some of their discretion to supranational agencies in order to pursue national interests. Lawn (2006) proposed governance was a new idea which denotes a change from hierarchy and state hierarchy and refers to a number of actors and institutions which originate from government and beyond. Global governance describes how a global polity is an evolving set of processes and interactions, not a fixed rule system and administrative hierarchy, involving heterogeneous private and public actors at multiple levels and international systems of rules and regulatory mechanisms. These emerge at the international level, though such rules lack the formal, coercive basis of legitimated political authority traditionally associated with nation-states (Rosenau and Czempiel, 1992).

3.4.1 The Catalysts of Change

As acknowledged in Section 3.2.1, international agents and supranational organisations, e.g. the OECD and the EU, are influential catalysts of changes to education policy, spreading the global 'travelling policies' and governing convergence of practice and policy amongst nations (Alexiadou and Jones, 2001; McNeeley and Yun-Kyung, 1994). It is important to differentiate between the structures and principles of these supranational agencies to gain insight into the policy process and the effect of these organisations. In terms of the structures of these organisations, they generally facilitate the transfer of policy through different mechanisms including harmonisation (associated with EU), dissemination (exemplified by the OECD's national indicators), standardisation, 'Installing Interdependence' and imposition (Dale, 1999;

Schafer, 2006). (See Section 3.2.3). In terms of their principles, they currently proselytise an ideology of neo-liberalism into their member's educational agendas (see above). This current ideology of neo-liberalism is separate to the structures of these agencies and is not contingent on their existence. The EU is recognised as a distinct scale of political activity which is irreducible to the aggregate of the interests of the members that make it up, exemplifying supranationalism (Dale, 2005). It demonstrates the separation between sovereignty and territory where regional influence precedes over national law. Both the OECD and EU are discussed before reviewing the concept of multilateralism.

3.4.1.1 The OECD

The OECD's ability to set the agenda for national education systems was recognised, though less documented (Rinne *et al.*, 2003). The OECD's work on educational policy is mostly founded upon research and supranational information management. It does not have a singular education agenda and represents its position on education in broad terms. It utilises tools which measure aspects of education across its member nations and issues comparative analysis and thematic reviews. Its influence over the member states is reliant upon the collection, processing, classification, analysing and marketing of education information for policy purposes. It has no legal power over states, yet exerts influence on the policies of its member in a variety of different, indirect fashions. The OECD can be described as an institutionalising mechanism for the new global education consensus which highlights the importance of an educated and multi-skilled work force to the competitive economic advantage of nations. While the OECD is an economic policy think-tank, it has emerged as a policy actor in its own right in the

context of globalisation (Henry *et al.*, 2001). In terms of its education remit, historically it was instigated for the free exchange of ideas but has become a policy agency in its own right which influences and directs member states towards its own agenda (Rizvi and Lingard, 2010). It has made a niche for itself as a 'highly technically competent agency' for the development of educational indicators and comparative global education performance measures which helps to constitute the global education policy field (Rawolle and Lingard, 2008:738). Such tools, e.g. soft governance with comparisons of attainment, also exert considerable pressure (Schafer, 2006). Such organisations demonstrate that the rescaling of the governance of education is not dependent on a single mechanism but a range of them, including policy networks.

3.4.1.2 The EU

The relationship of EU membership is complex, flexible and postmodern (Aalberts, 2004). Its multilevel governance approach does not describe a deterministic model, but a complex web of policy-making involving many agents across the local, national and global policy landscape (Brine, 2006). The EU does not endorse education policies as it is formally beyond its responsibility. It has a degree of sovereignty over national states through binding directives and the European Court of Justice but education is not an area where the EU has sovereignty due to the principle of subsidiarity. While in some areas, e.g. monetary or competition policy, the EU has shaped policy development, in the area of education, national authorities retain control (Laffan and O'Mahony, 2008).

The Treaty of Rome (1957) made limited reference to education in the form of vocation training (Article 128), as it was seen to contribute to national cultural identity and the remit of the member state. The EU's formal authority over higher education is restricted due to subsidiarity (Van der Wende, 2000) but it is a significant player (Field, 1997). Education was first recognised as an area of central responsibility for the EU in the Maastricht Treaty (the Treaty of the EU) in 1992. At that time of recession for a number of European economies, there was a shift from Keynesianism to neoliberalism encompassing an interest in human capital and a different role for higher education (Robertson, 2009). Discourse around a European knowledge-based economy emerged and resonated with the policy perspective of the OECD that post-industrial societies should be knowledge-based. The European Higher Education Area was a response to these dynamics. At the 2000 Lisbon Summit, a vision of 'Europeanisation of education' and the 'European educational model' were mandated, providing the EU with an authorisation to increase a common interest approach in education which transcended national diversities (Lawn, 2006). The Lisbon Agenda was different in nature and objectives to the Bologna Process, though both promote the integration of national policies toward Europeanisation (Veiga and Amaral, 2006).

Through the 'Open Method of Coordination' (OMC), EU member states began to collaborate on economic and social objectives and formed the Education and Training 2010 Programme (Ball, 2008). The EU created the OMC to facilitate a gradual convergence across the various national systems. Resultant from such soft law mechanisms, there are no official sanctions for those who do not attain the goals. It is attractive for both the EU and nation-

state as it leaves subsidiarity intact. (See Section 3.5.3 for discussion of the OMC). Subsidiarity allows the EU to direct policy actions within the Union, while the member states retain the fundamental responsibility for organising and implementing education. The principle of subsidiarity is the basis of the education policy in the EU. Article 149.1 states that:

The Community shall contribute to the development of quality education by encouraging cooperation between Member States for the content of teaching and the organisation of education systems and their linguistic and cultural diversity.

While subsidiarity is important for the EU and its member states, 'Europe' was not excluded from policy making in education as could be expected from the Treaty of Articles (Dale, 2009: 32-3). Dale suggested that the flexible interpretations of Article 149.1 allow for agenda amplification. Thus, some argue that the 'old field of national education' is being restructured across the EU to create 'a governing discourse' where unity is formed and planned upon the knowledge economy and learning (Lawn, 2006). The responsibility for education policy within the EU lies with the nation-state and the development of a scale subject to governance at European level has been a contentious route with the education ministers demonstrating prudence (Dale, 2005). The creation of the EHEA to foster the mobility of staff and students and the mutual recognition of awards has been problematic (Fairclough, 2006). The legal basis for the international recognition of qualifications was provided by the Lisbon Convention and there have been initiatives since, by UNESCO and the OECD, to extend the regulatory apparatus for international qualifications recognition.

Increasingly, countries agreed to less national sovereignty and more inter-governmental cooperation, while they retain the primary responsibility for education (De Wit, 2007). Regional initiatives, including the Bologna Process, alter the institutional landscape of European higher education, with multilateral groups and transnational associations, making the inter-organisation situation significant from a policy and governance perspective. It exemplifies the Europeanisation of education, demonstrating soft governance, which has learning, education and pedagogy at its core and is not nationally or statutory bound (Lawn, 2006). The assumption that the discourse of internationalising education suggests that the power to direct education is located with Member States is contradicted (Robertson, 2009:66). Robertson argued that internationalising higher education in Europe is more accurately represented as a process of regionalisation and, more recently globalisation, and are the outcomes of social forces, both governmental and non-governmental, engaged in the progressive restructuring of European social relations. Non-national agents and governments are involved in the processes of regionalisation based on historical common features. Regionalisation is defined as:

... a process where social arrangements become disembedded from their national context and reattached to a group of nations (Beerkens 2004:30).

It might be construed as a concerted pluralist demonstration of national interests. Or has it obtained the characteristics of a supranational state, with a new governance level covering the entire region, not individual nations? The force of transnational activity shifts the intensity of supranational governance responsible for disembedding. (See Section 3.2.3.4). However, the benefits of increased regional and global opportunities might reduce when universities

operate in a specific environment where decisions are influenced by prevailing norms (Beerkens, 2004). This combination of institutional embeddedness and governance during increased multilateral activity requires investigation.

3.4.2 Multilateralism and the EU

The European Commission has been mostly engaged in the creation of a dialogue framework, benchmarking and co-ordination in Europe. Member states are accountable for the creation of internal co-ordination methods vertically between the regional and national levels and also horizontally between the different government departments (Kaiser and Prange, 2004). However, the forms of transnational authority influencing the states or institutions' power to make decisions are absent. Since the 1980s, there has been organisational change of national higher education and the assertion of a higher education structure of governance based upon 'steering at a distance' and assessment. More recently, the study of educational multilateralism has increased, as evidenced by the educational experimentation across institutions like OECD and EU (Mundy, 2007). This suggested that nations have more to gain by taking a multilateral rather than a unilateral or bilateral approach (Jones, 2007) and is associated with standard setting at EU level. The EU has been restricted to the support and supplementation of national systems of education, but its efforts to standardise the content and structure of different nation's education systems has increased through working groups and interministerial meetings, demonstrating a process of 'comitology', (i.e. governance through intergovernmental committee). The locus of decision-making, forced towards the transnational level and the international organisations prevalent, are a

permanent demonstration of a 'pluriscalar' or multilevel educational governance arena (Dale and Robertson, 2002).

Mundy (2007: 350) provided two explanations of educational multilateralism. First, the neo-institutionalist approach explains the emergence of institutional and organisational similarity in a growing number of countries by developing the argument that universal norms and culture shape national policies (Amaral and Magalhaes, 2004:79). This approach explains the macro-structural forces and processes which influenced the contents and direction of changes, but undermined the human agency role as it could be functionalist, determinist and objectivist (Vaira, 2004:496). A second theory of multilateralism linked international education cooperation to cultural imperialism and the expansion of world capitalism, suggesting the need to go from theory into practice and analyse the impact of changing governance structures and institutional environment on the identities, rules and rewards that govern the academic commons (Enders and Fulton, 2002). Undoubtedly, the expansion of transnational relations was evidence of a global public domain (Ruggie, 2004), which competed with multiple levels over the embedding of education polity, including the local, national, regional and transnational (Mundy, 2007).

Both approaches are useful but do not capture the complexity of multilateralism. European integration challenges our theoretical and empirical tools for studying the international breadth of frameworks, which focus on domestic policy and the nation-state (Enders, 2004). The input side of policy and concern for the macro and meso level organisational changes neglects the micro dynamics and effects in practices. There is a need for a

multi-level and multi-actor approach to develop governance theory and understand the complexities at play, using a richer empirical base. Universities particularly provide an interesting background for this given their structure and governance which include a variety of stakeholders from local, national and international communities.

3.4.3. Universities and Governance

The European Commission (E.C.) suggests that the European knowledge-based economy is reliant upon the modernisation of the European University. The E.C. recommend that universities conquer their disparate faculties and target their efforts collectively for research, services and teaching through multilateral consortia, joint courses, networks and cooperation (Commission on the European Communities, 2006). As a result, the political interest in higher education escalated (Barroso, 2005). The Bologna Process is related to a larger political process of building a federal Europe (Tomusck, 2004) and aims to organise a 'structural convergence' of higher education systems in Europe (Olsen and Maassen, 2007:9):

To some extent the Bologna process can be seen as, at least initially, an attempt to recover a national and educational sector initiative as a countermove to the power of the Commission and to reforms giving priority to economic concerns. The process also represents an attempt to define a European role in higher education and to give premises from the educational sector a more important place in European policy making (Olsen and Maassen, 2007:9).

While education is predominantly a national issue, changes in the European social model, including soft governance tools induce a re-division and rescaling of responsibility for the functions of the national education systems to support the European economy (Robertson and Dale, 2006). Universities

are bound to state purposes of various kinds. These intentions include major national projects such as nationalism, state-building, social engineering and economic development. However, universities are not institutions that are 'defining' to orthodox definitions of the state (Scott and Hood, 2004: 75). Higher education structures have altered due to the financial and political implication of massification (Scott and Hood, 2004:78). University governance structures were drawn from church and monastic models, as well as larger 'invisible colleges' in which scientists and academics operate and heavily emphasise control by mutuality in the form of peer-group control over individuals. For reasons, including ambitions to attain best value from higher education public funds, governments in European states and other developed countries devise mechanisms to supervise teaching and research quality and quantity.

European, including Irish, universities traditionally demonstrated a weak capacity to steer themselves and as their complexity grew, that weakness became more debilitating and created a need for a greater managerial capacity and a strengthened steering core (Clark, 1998; OECD, 2006). Changes on governance become part of the erosion of sovereignty where the state is less involved with its HEIs and transfers power, not just because of globalisation, but for the sustainability of the welfare state and to reduce higher education funding. Ultimately, national governments strive to develop their international competitiveness and have two options (Beerkens, 2004). First, they can act collectively (e.g. the Bologna Process). Second, they can promote their universities' competitiveness by introducing market mechanisms (e.g. league tables) and new student markets.

The drive towards an European standpoint on universities and their governance was introduced in settings beyond the state, e.g. intergovernmental and supranational processes of cooperation and policymaking and modes of governance (Olsen and Maassen, 2007). As outlined in Section 3.3.5, when networks multiply, they also threaten the governments' ability to govern as functions are lost upwards to the EU, downwards to special-purpose bodies and outwards towards agencies (Rhodes, 1997a). While the nation state's governance capacities wane due to these recent developments, the state continues to be 'a pivotal institution' (Hirst and Thompson cited by Rhodes, 1997a:18). The development of a theory of political governance began with the steering actions of political authorities as they attempt to shape socio-economic structures and processes (Mayntz, 1998). The initial paradigm was enlarged by questioning the 'governability' of higher education systems and concept of 'steering at a distance' became more prevalent (Enders, 2004).

As the 'caretakers' of higher education change, governments transfer authority to HEI's, regional or supranational agencies or to the private sector due to the increasing demands on public resources. In many cases, the pursuit of a greater institutional autonomy in terms of governance, management, and a more strategic approach are instigated due to reduced basic funding, increasing market pressures, and the broader role of the institutions (Schmidt and Langberg, 2007). However, the popular concepts of how a good university or good governance should operate loosely relate to theoretically informed, empirical studies of how universities are organised and governed, how they change and function (Olsen and Maassen, 2007:13). Institutionalists looking to explain similarity amongst universities suggest

that institutions of the nation-state were influenced by the supranational levels of dominant values and processes of a Western ideology (Meyer *et al.*, 1997). Current trends in higher education cannot be explained solely in terms of national specificities or on the basis of the institutionalist approach. Both approaches explain the trends arising from globalisation and at what scale in education policy was formed (Robertson and Dale, 2006). The intergovernmental Bologna Declaration is an instrument of such change but to date research lacks an institution and sector specific view (Olsen and Maassen, 2007:7).

3.5 The Bologna Declaration and Governance

The Bologna Declaration was outlined in Section 2.4 Higher Education Policy. See Appendix Six for its key tenets. Solutions suggested to change universities to support the knowledge economy recommend new organisational structures and altering the internal and external relations of the university's power and authority of governance. Recommendations that governments should be less dominant in university governance create conflict between those advocating and opposing the changes in higher education and its societal implications. While the Bologna Process is associated with 'harmonisation' of EU higher education systems, Rizvi (2006) argued that the Declaration 'barely masks' its ideological assumptions regarding the importance of a commitment across Europe to neo-liberal higher education reforms, despite also insisting upon the principles of national autonomy and diversity. The Process's objectives were underpinned by market logic, i.e. the European system of higher education needs to become a more effective actor to compete in the global higher education market (Rizvi, 2006). The basic frame of political governance was

comprehensive but requires study of the relationships and dynamics of the various modes of co-ordination in (national) governance studies on higher education (Enders, 2004). Political governance approaches are unable to deal with the problems raised by European integration, which requires an enlargement of governance theory to a supra-national level (Enders, 2004; Dale, 2009).

Olsen (2007:37) suggested that debates and reforms regarding the EHEA provide an interesting setting to study universities' institutional dynamics and the resultant changes in their governance as they search for an institutional identity within the EU. Of interest was the impact of soft governance tools, e.g. networks and the actors who take upon themselves the functions of governance, import and renew languages of 'external agencies' as they are absorbed into policy and implemented into the university's practice. Policies emerging from the Bologna Process form part of a process of European integration and resulting in the emergence of a multi-level and multi-actor context within which higher education organisations function and improve themselves in their international activities. Evaluations and empirical research suggest that national and European policies are not uniform and further research on the perceptions of the European policies and responses to these policies on actors of national policy and individual institutions are required (Enders, 2004). It requires empirical research into how local actors and organisations extend their activities onto the international stage.

3.5.1 Bologna since 1999

The Bologna Process was launched to establish the EHEA. As with the Erasmus programme negotiations, the Bologna Process was instigated by the EUA and endorsed by the European Ministers of Education (Robertson, 2009). This is an important observation and highlighted by the Commission, who are sensitive to claims of interfering in 'national' affairs. The Commission continues to be a key stakeholder and has been active in promoting the Process in the interests of the Lisbon Agenda. Within the EHEA, staff and student mobility benefit from aligned national quality assurance agencies, consistent degree structures, the adoption of the credit transfer system and a uniform description of qualification description (i.e. the Diploma Supplement).

The Process is complex and cannot be classified as an example of 'clean, rational, linear policy implementation' (Veiga and Amaral, 2006:286). Creating an aspiration for 'Europe' was not attainable through bureaucracy or coercion alone and requires a political plan to attract individuals, HEI's and member states (Lawn, 2006). The progress of the Bologna Process adds to the dense landscape of European structures, policies and programmes that are underpinned by both a competitive project and a geopolitical project (Robertson, 2009). EU activism has taken on a very different nature since the signing of the Bologna Declaration in 1999. It demonstrated the structural changes occurring in the name of globalisation, European and regional development (Ahola, 2005) and was entering a new phase as the principles for mobility, employability, transparency and comparability are operationalised institutionally (Amaral and Magalhaes, 2004; Neave, 2005). The university's ability to serve society and compete internationally was seen

to hold the role previously played by governments and if the state is to have a less dominant role, it will be governed by standardisation, benchmarking, and exchange of good practice.

3.5.2 Responsibility for Bologna

Responsibility for implementation of the Bologna Declaration objectives in each signatory country lies with the academic institutions, student organisations and professional bodies. The Bologna Follow-Up Group has responsibility for the Bologna Process. (See Section 2.4). The Process uses language which unites and 'harmonises' education systems, ensuring the diversity of national systems. Projects, e.g. the 'Tuning Educational Structures in Europe,' are integrated into the Process to address the 'translation' of various curriculum experiences across institutional and national settings into equivalent, translatable and consistent units. Again, the 'Tuning Process' is driven by institutions in Member States (Dale, 2009).

Due to the 'Bologna' policy trajectory, a discourse regarding the global competitive knowledge economy and its obstacles emerged which provides the rationale and legitimacy for the creation of EHEA. The Bologna Declaration refers to the need to increase the international competitiveness of European higher education, making competitiveness a driving force for the internationalisation of higher education. This forced Member States, and invited and challenged those beyond it to engage in, structural changes in their higher education systems (Robertson, 2009). While the key actors maintaining these processes are steered by the Member States, there is evidence of a relationship between the European social forces shaping the project (Robertson, 2009).

3.5.3 Soft Methods of Governance

While education is predominantly a national issue, changes in the European social model as a goal of greater policy effectiveness, e.g. soft governance tools including networking amongst policy actors, academics, national organisations including universities (Lawn, 2006) or the OMC, induce a re-division and rescaling of the national education systems' functions to support the European economy (Robertson and Dale, 2006). The idea of a competitive European knowledge-based economy creates issues for the capacity, mandate and governance of education as it moves from national to European levels selectively. The European University and the Bologna Process demonstrate the complexity of the power distributions in this field and the OMC approach indicates the current limitations of supranationalism. Technically, the OMC is an EC initiative and the Bologna Process is not. However, there are similar aspects between the OMC and governance of the Bologna Process.

The OMC was a creation of the E.C. to facilitate and encourage a gradual convergence of the various national education systems' contributions to the social entity. OMC was adopted based upon the decision of the European Council in 1994 to monitor national developments and was formally adopted at the 2000 Lisbon European Council (Veiga and Amaral, 2008). It is an exclusive convergence at international level through agreed 'quality' benchmarks and creates a 'new' structure of the governance of education using multilateral surveillance. The OMC was said not to compare the member states against each other but to benchmark them by defining guidelines and encouraging states to converge. It is associated with the sharing of best practice and peer group learning. The importance of soft law

tools in the area of higher education is of prominence because of universities' autonomy. This demands a soft law approach due to the statutory protection of universities unlike in other areas of education. While the OMC approach was explicitly adopted by the EU, there has always been an element of peer review and agreed benchmarks in many legislative processes. What appears to make the OMC different is that it has been explicitly agreed upon as transparent policy tool by member states. The differences between the OMC and Traditional Soft Law are outlined:

Figure 3.2 OMC and Traditional Soft law

Open Method of Coordination	Traditional Soft Law
Intergovernmental approach: the Council and Commission are dominant	Supranational approach: the Commission and Courts of Justice are dominant
Political monitoring at the highest level	Administrative monitoring
Clear procedures and iterative process	Weak and ad-hoc procedures
Systematic linking across policy areas	No explicit linking of policy areas
Interlinking EU and national public action	No explicit linking of EU-national levels
Seeks participation of social actors	Does not explicitly seek participation
Aims at enhancing learning processes	No explicit goals on enhancing learning.

(Borras and Jacobsson, 2004:188)

Soft methods, including the OMC, present alternatives to hard law that could not be incorporated in Europe's coordination of this sector (Olsen and Maassen, 2007). The OMC does not use formal constraints, legal sanctions or formal policy coordination (Rodrigues, 2004; Gornitzka, 2005; Ball, 2008). It is attractive for national governments as it limits apparent loss of

sovereignty. States rely on multilateral surveillance to co-ordinate their policies in the absence of binding rules. The OMC is used to implement the Bologna Processes and assumes policy implementation as a logical and rational top-down linear process from the Commission to the nation-states, institutions and citizens. It was not chosen for its effectiveness but its capacity to facilitate compromises, substituting the substantial for procedural agreement. It allows members respond consistently to common hurdles in educational policy and retain their sovereignty individually. However, as organisational processes do not occur separately, HEI's use their autonomy to respond to challenges differently (Veiga and Amaral, 2008).

Multilateral surveillance rests on peer reviews and targets at bringing states to adhere to a specific policy, developing common standards and acquiring best practices through international comparison. As there are no sanctions, this model builds on a co-operative effort to criticise existing policies and generate new ones. In the absence of other leverages, any impact on national government results from the (mild) pressure of having to justify one's actions in the light of a common evaluation of the compliance of this action with joint goals (Schafer, 2006). The OMC fixes EU guidelines for goal achievement set in the short, medium and long term, establishing quantitative and qualitative indicators and benchmarks against the best globally, and alters these to the needs of different member states as a means of comparing best practice (Schafer, 2006). It translates European guidelines into national and regional policies by setting targets and adopting measures, taking into account differences and ensures periodic monitoring, evaluation and peer review, organised as mutual learning processes. There was no convincing empirical base for evaluating the effectiveness of the OMC

regarding its output or outcomes. OMC is a special form of multilateral surveillance. It does not differ from the instruments deployed by other international organisations but it is intergovernmental and voluntary.

3.5.4 Policy Networks and the Bologna Process

Borras and Jacobsson (2004) suggested that the networking generated by OMC occurs at several levels; first the coordination processes required co-operation by many ministries at national level. Second, the co-ordination procedures required input from social partners and civil society actors. Third, new committees were established to monitor co-ordination processes, where representatives of the member states and the Commission interacted, exchanged ideas and experiences and exerted peer pressure on one another (Jacobsson and Vifell, 2003; Trubeck and Trubeck, 2003). Regarding the Bologna Process, the role of intergovernmental committees, experts and academics, as members of associations often became new political actors, transmitting and mediating the EU through institutional priorities, networking discourses and associational identities (Lawn, 2006:282). The EU efforts to standardise the content and structure of different nations' education systems also increased through the process of 'comitology'. The centre of decision-making at transnational level through international organisations was prevalent and a permanent demonstration of a multilevel educational governance arena (Dale and Robertson, 2002). National and institutional factors also play a role in the reforms and different national methods of dealing with the Bologna opportunity affecting institutional actions and attitudes (Reichert and Tauch, 2004).

The Bologna Declaration has been highly influential in encouraging universities to restructure their curricula. These changes have impacted upon the governance of universities and to analyse this, we return to the concept of a policy network. Lawn (2006:282) suggested that experts and academics, as members of associations, often become new political actors, transmitting and mediating the EU through institutional priorities, networking discourses and associational identities. Networks and professional associations play a role in governing EU policy through semi-maintained networks including benchmarking work groups, EU-research projects, Socrates, etc. There are large pressure groups, e.g. the Compostela Group, the Santander Group and the EUA. Individuals working on harmonisation problems, exchange and competition, do so in European committees, task-force groups, networks, commissions, exchanges, etc., which symbolised a distinctive European education policy culture (Lawn and Lingard, 2002).

While there are more influential networks, e.g. the Intergovernmental Committees arising from the Bologna Process, there is evidence that the agents (i.e. organisations or individuals) are highly influential in determining the outcomes of degree structures and academic policy at local/institutional level. For example, the Irish Government has not moved decisively to resolve some of its anomalies with the Bologna Process, e.g., the 3 + 1 structure of some degrees, stating that academic awards should be defined by learning outcomes rather than by the duration of study (Clancy, 2004:2). This demonstrates the different national contexts and objectives or perspectives used to implement the Bologna Process. The agency of institutions (and individuals) was also evident with the HEIGLO project, which reviewed the Bologna Process in some larger member states, demonstrating that

institutions influenced the local implementation process by using their autonomy to govern their own strategies (Veiga and Amaral, 2006).

3.6 Conclusion and Research Opportunity

Neave suggests (2005:116) what has been written about the Bologna Process was about the 'pays politique' where the process was conceived and the 'pays réel', where the Bologna Process was implemented, requires investigation. How the embedding of the Declaration's objective 'occurs' is contingent on various variables regarding the institution, its agents, the national system, etc., and the policy network is one mechanism which mediates between these entities. The complexity of European universities and the Bologna Process demonstrate the power distributions in this field and indicate the limitations of supranationalism. These activities demonstrate the operationalisation of governance, rather than a 'government approach'. Dale suggested that a feature which distinguishes between governance and government is that it requires us to problematise, rather than take for granted, the nature of and the relationships between the spaces, subjects and coordination of governing education and how it is attempted and in some cases achieved regionally in the EU. The difficulty of governance may be seen as establishing the coordination of activities and agents that makes the work of organisations possible (Dale, 2009:28). It raises questions about who does what, over what area, and how, why and with what consequences for whom. It raises questions, around institutional structures, methods of political decision making and form of policy instruments used in the policy process.

Universities and the processes of regionalisation and globalisation warrant study due to the unique function of universities in society. Universities as organisations are associated with the process of nation-building and thus, provide an interesting context to review the phenomenon of globalisation. Dale (2009) observed that that much of the work on European education policy takes a problem-solving rather than a critical theory approach, which means that the correspondence between regional and national policies requires exploration, as does the hierarchical relationship between Europe and nations. Ball and other theorists of policy assume that the nation state has maintained political authority of policy and that the state and its agencies are the locus of origin for public policy, despite increasing supranational pressure (Rizvi, 2006). This belief assumes that the state continues to exert authority within a specified geographical location with the autonomy to develop its own policies. However, as global agendas increasingly proliferate in national and institutional contexts, these assumptions require review. As the policy cycle has become globalised, Dale (1999) suggested qualitative mechanisms by which globalisation affects national policies. This typology demonstrates the direct and indirect mechanisms of globalisation but it does not demonstrate how the policy process between institutional, national and global is rescaled as these mechanisms are operationalised and policies are implemented.

CHAPTER FOUR: METHODOLOGY

4.0 Introduction

The literature reviewed in Chapter 3 outlines the current gap regarding the relationship of supranational policy processes and institutional policy making. Acknowledging that there is no single approach to policy analysis in the field of education (Ozga, 2000), this chapter explains how the author approached the research of this study. The purpose of this research was to review the impact of supranational processes of policy making on UCD's institutional dynamics and policy production. (Please see Section 4.1). The research design and the ontological and epistemological approaches underpinning these objectives are presented in Section 4.2. Section 4.3 overviews the case study design underpinning this thesis. This was important given the need for reflexivity when researching your own institution. The research methods used to collect the data, including semi-structured interviewing and textual analysis, are discussed. Content analysis and critical discourse analysis were used to analyse the data - see Section 4.7. Section 4.8 acknowledges some of the difficulties in approaching the data collection. Finally, the coding of data using a qualitative software tool and its subsequent analysis is outlined, as well as the research's limitations.

4.1 Research Question

The research question was:

How do supranational processes (including European integration and the work of the OECD) and policy making affect UCD's institutional dynamics and policy production?

The sub-questions guiding the research were to:

1. analyse UCD's modularisation policy and its relationship to national and supranational education discourses.
2. determine what, if any, are the policy effects on the changing relationships between the state and universities (and their internal governance).
3. verify the extent of state engagement in supranational cooperation and inter-organisational agencies and/or networks and how it affects the governance of higher education nationally and locally.
4. establish what policy mechanisms were evident in UCD's modularisation of programmes (as outlined by Dale, 1999).

4.2 Research Design

This section outlines the structure and parameters of this research design, including the ontological and epistemological positions and its research design rationale.

4.2.1 Ontology and Epistemology

The ontological position of this research is underpinned by 'critical realism'. Neither positivism nor interpretivism are helpful alone and consequently,

the research was underpinned by critical realism. The study sought to draw upon both observable, generalisable and predictable data (i.e. associated with the positivist tradition) and also the social construction of reality and the provision of explanations of intentionality of human behaviour emphasised by the interpretivist approach. Critical realism, as a research paradigm, attempts to combine the 'how', associated with the interpretivist approach, and the 'why', linked the positivist tradition, while also reviewing the importance of power. This research draws on an interpretative paradigm which is about the 'why' and it also draws on a positivist paradigm which is linked to the aspiration to provide an account of what happens without offering explanation. Thus, critical realism amalgamates the strengths of approaches. While social science may use the same methods that are applied to natural sciences, there is also a need to adopt an interpretive understanding. The work is based upon the premise that there is a structured reality which demands an interpretation of causal links, e.g. the links between changes in national governance and the emergence of regionalism, to explain local institutional dynamics. It is assumed that pre-existing social structures are shaped and influenced by actors and vice versa, e.g. UCD developed in an Irish context which shaped the university's structure, culture and management. UCD's staff and students in turn helped to shape Irish society. Both aspects affect the policy process.

The epistemology of this research is hermeneutical-phenomenological. Phenomenology describes an individuals' consciousness and experience of a phenomenon (Johnson and Christensen, 2007). This study is researching people's perception of the policy-making process. Phenomenology researches a view of the 'life-world' of participants, gaining an insight into

their meanings and describing their experience of a phenomenon. It is an investigation of beliefs as objective existing things. Phenomenological research is based upon the comprehension (or having an in depth knowledge of a phenomenon or setting) which is attained by reflecting on one's own experiences (Morse, 1994:36). In this thesis, the focus is the experience of policy-makers of the policy process in UCD and Irish higher education. The experiential descriptions of this process as experienced by actors were recorded and these dialogues were examined to highlight descriptive words and idiomatic phrases which help the understanding of their experience. Data from policy documents was collected which complimented these dialogues with participants about their experience of this process. The use of these documents, as primary data, also draws upon the hermeneutical tradition. Hermeneutics is:

... an approach which seeks to analyse a text from the perspective of the person who penned it, while emphasising the social and historical context within which it was produced (Bryman, 2001; 382-3).

This approach allows for the historical and social context where the text was produced. It provides for qualitative analysis of the text's content, taking into account the context of its origin. The approach is influenced by a critical hermeneutical approach, as it involves the examination of documents, using my knowledge of the organisational context. I have worked for UCD since 2002 and have a tacit knowledge of the organisation. Understanding how UCD operates assisted understanding and analysis of the data collected. (See Section 4.6.1).

The method is critical in approach and this allows self-conscious reflection on those social conditions at the text's production, dissemination, and reception,

acknowledging how they contribute to the creation and continuation of differentials of power in and around organisations (Phillips and Brown, 1993). Critical hermeneutics underpins how particular texts contribute to the maintenance or development of this meaning system and also the patterns of social relations. How a text might condition the understanding of an organisation, and actors outside of the organisation, is central to critical hermeneutics. This approach assists with the analysis of who produced the text, why it was produced also and is connected to the idea of power. (See Chapter 3.3.1 for a discussion of power). Underpinning research with critical hermeneutics means discourse analysis could be integrated with interviewing individual participants within an interpretative frame (Phillips and Brown, 1993).

Individuals together 'shape tools, invent languages, adhere to values, devise institutions, and so on' (Berger & Luckmann, 1967:7). Ongoing communicative interaction between individuals constitutes and maintains culture throughout myths and symbols through which those actors, and some external actors, understand the organisation and its location in a wider socio-system (Berger & Luckmann, 1967). This structure of symbols certifies certain activities and validates patterns of social relations. The system of texts is sustained and modified through communication of different types. The system is freely available and can be interpreted by organisation members and interested extraorganisational persons. Thus, the study of culture requires the interpretation of a meaningful artefact (i.e. text) to understand culture's role in the ongoing re-creation of an organisation and its effect on people inside and outside it (Phillips and Brown, 1993). By combining a

hermeneutic perspective with a critical interest, there are three 'interpretive moments' involved in textual analysis (Phillips and Brown, 1993):

1. Social-historical
2. Formal
3. Interpretation-reinterpretation

Within the social historical moment, there are three aspects of the text. Firstly, there is the intentional aspect which acknowledges that texts are the intentional acts of an individual or group. Secondly, there is the referential aspect which recognises that a text is a construction representative of something. Thirdly, the contextual aspect highlights that a text is inseparable from the social and historical context, in which it is produced and received. The formal moment takes accounts of both the conventional aspect and structural aspect of the text. The conventional aspects recognise that a text follows a convention of different varieties as a meaningful construct. It uses different conventions regarding the encoding and decoding of the text. The structural aspect acknowledges the comprehension of a text is in the relationship between its constituent elements. Having analysed the social-historical and formal moments, it is possible to interpret and reinterpret them to construct an interpretation of the text and its role in a social system (Phillips and Brown, 1993).

4.3 Case Study Design

UCD was selected as the primary site for its exploratory value. The case might be classified as an 'instrumental' case study, as it provides an insight into educational policy making at UCD, allowing exploration of theory regarding governance and regionalisation (Stake, 2000). UCD's history and

its role in the Irish nation make its selection of interest to study of the relationship and policy process between an institution, the nation and supranational agencies. (See Chapter Two). An explanatory case study was selected as it provided an insight into 'real people in real situations' (Cohen *et al.*, 2000:181). A case study is:

...the basic idea is that one case (or perhaps a small number of cases) will be studied in detail, using whatever methods appropriate. While there may be a variety of specific purposes and research questions, the general objective is to develop as full an understanding of that case as possible (Punch, 1998:50).

It is associated with the deduction and theory-testing approach (Hammersley, 1992) and is an accepted research strategy (Yin, 1994:1). Its strength is its ability to deal with a variety of evidence, providing rich empirical material and facilitating data cross-checking (Roche, 1997). In this case, policy documents and semi-structured interviews were used to address the research question. This rationale was underpinned by Sayer (2000), who suggested two causal pressures influencing texts: social structures and practices, and the social agents (i.e. people involved). This approach was not about a 'simple mechanical causality or implying predictable regularities' but gaining an insight into the topic's complexity (Fairclough, 2003: 22).

Reliability, validity and replicability are criteria associated for objective research (Brannick and Coghlan, 2007). These criteria refer to the positivist tradition but can be used within an interpretative philosophy (Taylor, 2001). In a case-study, the criteria depend on what is appropriate to the researcher's assumptions, the situated nature of knowledge, and participants acknowledging the reflexivity of the research, etc. Understanding and documenting the relevance of the research site and respondents at the time of

the research and how they related to the researcher were important to data collection and analysis. While a documented methodology can overcome reliability and replicability issues, attention to the later assumptions were adhered to by triangulating findings. A field-diary allowed a reflexive approach to the research, capturing the nature of assumptions and knowledge.

4.3.1 Research Site

UCD is Ireland's most diverse university, with approximately 24,000 students. Since January 2004, UCD has experienced a high profile restructuring and the modularisation of programmes. (See Section 2.5). These policies were outlined in UCD Strategic Plan 2005-2008. UCD School of Business was identified as the local locus of policy making due to its size and its implementation of UCD's modular 'Horizons' framework. The School was used to investigate the policy process and review the impact of policy reform upon local agents and programmes.

Naming UCD as the primary research site was advantageous and disadvantageous. Naming the site allowed proper contextualisation of the policy context at this time. The disadvantages related to whether interviewees would reveal as sensitive information as they might have done if the site were anonymous. (See Section 4.6 for a discussion of ethics).

4.4 Methodology

Methodological distinctions are positioned in the ontological and epistemological underpinnings of research (Symon and Cassell, 1998). The qualitative form is informed by the various methodological concerns

influencing the research's conceptualisation, design and execution (Denzin and Lincoln, 2005). Qualitative research stretches across fields, disciplines and subject matter and is associated with a range of traditions, including positivism and post-positivism. It is:

... [a] situated activity that locates the observer in the world. It consists of a set of interpretative, material practices that make the world visible. These practices transform the world. They turn the world into a series of representations, including field notes, interviews, conversations, photographs, recordings and memos to self. At this level, qualitative research involves an interpretative, naturalistic approach to the world. This means that qualitative researchers study things in their natural settings, attempting to make sense of, or interpret, phenomena in terms of the meaning people bring to them.

(Denzin and Lincoln, 2005:3)

A qualitative approach is associated with probing the experience of individuals and is of value when researching emerging themes and issues (Symon and Cassell, 1998). As outlined, this thesis researches the power in the policy process, which can be elusive. A social network analysis, as suggested by Scott (2000), was considered but due to the number of actors involved it would not be possible to quantify them. This would also not allow for sufficient insight into the role of the key policy actors. Equally, given the timeline for the completion of an Ed.D thesis it would be unfeasible for a single researcher to collect the data required for a complex network analysis of this topic.

4.4.1 Methodological considerations

A number of qualitative methods were selected to complete the study. Primary resources are listed in Appendix Fifteen.

4.4.1.2 Textual Analysis of Policy Documents

Texts provide an 'abundance of material' for qualitative researchers (Peräkylä, 2005:870). Policy documents form a primary source, providing basic and original material for raw evidence (Finnergan, 1996). Yet, Taylor (1997) acknowledged that little attention is given to this methodology in the field of education policy. Ball (1990:9) suggested that policy analysis has been governed by critique and commentary rather than actual empirical research. While interviews, questionnaires, observations and experiments are important data in social and education research, they do not comprise of all the information forms, despite what is implied in 'methods' textbooks (Finnergan, 1996). Smith (1974; 1990) highlighted that much of social life is mediated by written texts of different kinds. UCD's policy documents were sourced as they provided an insight into the influences on its policy.

4.4.2 Interviews

Interviews yield insights into people's biographies, experiences, opinions, values, aspiration, attitudes and feelings (May, 2001: 120). Interviewing elite interviewees is considered to be a 'crucial methodological tool' (McEvoy, 2006:189). Interviews are required to produce work with 'textural depth as well as empirical strength' (Lilleker, 2003:208). Interviewing is an important data collection technique used to access the views and interpretations of subjects under investigation. Interviewing provides more of an insight into the political process, the devices between influential actors and how sequences of events were perceived than a survey or focus group. While interviewing provides rich insights, it does have limitations and requires reinforcement from other forms of empirical data. For example, interviewing a candidate in person can be more time consuming as there can be a wide

geographic dispersion between participants, it can be costly to travel and it can be time consuming to prepare interview transcripts (Cooper and Schindler, 1998)

Semi-structured interviewing was used to obtain information from interviewees, due to the depth of information and detail they secure (Cooper and Schindler, 1998). Semi-structured interviewing is often used to interview elites (Leech, 2002) and is suited to policy research (Easterby-Smith *et al.*, 2002). The use of open-ended questions allows the contextual nuance of responses to be captured and probed (Aberbach and Rockman, 2002). This approach was used to maximise the reliability and validity of the measurement of key concepts arising from the policy analysis. The interviews remained open-ended but followed a set of questions, providing a framework and an opportunity to probe and observe (Cooper and Schindler, 1998:291).

A number of subject themes guided the interviews, including the origins of the policy, the process of policy production, the positioning of universities and the policy context in 2004/2005. The interview questions also derived from the themes arising in the literature, e.g. who was involved in policy formation, what networks were in place, what influences were drawn upon, awareness of policy discourses, etc., and the findings of the critical discourse analysis. (See Appendix Seven). Interviewees from UCD were asked to recall and describe their experiences of the policy process. Interviewees from national and international organisations were asked to discuss the policy process around 2005 and to explain the policy relationships between different organisations. Themes were not generally supplied to interviewees in advance of the interview.

4.4.2.1 Interviewing Elites

Interviewing elites creates additional considerations and is 'both an art and a craft' (Peabody *et al.*, 1990:451). An elite is defined as:

... those with close proximity to power or policymaking: the category would include all elected representatives, executive officers of organisations and senior state employees (Lilleker, 2003:207).

In conducting interviews with elites, there were three goals (Goldstein, 2002:669). First, data needed to be gathered from a sample of elites in order to make generalisable claims. Second, it is key to discover a specific piece of information. Finally, interviews were related to data sources, providing context to the research work. Literature on interviewing elites suggested key strategies of collecting data, e.g. explaining the project to target respondents and their contribution to the research (Goldstein, 2002; Lilleker, 2003). Interviews commenced with less threatening questions, progressing to more direct and assertive questions (Leech, 2002). The difficulty with interviewing elites relates to data interpretation, as some have different perceptions of an experience (Lilleker, 2003). An interviewee may have a distinctive perspective of what the facts are and could, intentionally or unintentionally, attempt to rewrite history in their own favour or in favour of their organisation. While Lilleker acknowledges this cannot be avoided, awareness means it can be addressed. Thus, it was vital to corroborate facts and to systematically compare results. Findings were cross-referenced with other data sources to verify facts.

Interviewing elites involves a paradox regarding the flexibility of open-ended questioning, intensifying the validity and reliability issues associated with interviewing (Berry, 2002). Power relations are generally present

between the interviewee and interviewer (Wilson, 1996). Due to the power inequality between the interviewer and the elite interviewee, it can be difficult to balance the approach of a deferential researcher to engage with prestigious interviewees and to 'hew' a 'standardised line of discussion' (Dexter, 1970:6). Dexter's advice was followed and the interviewer tried to review the data, with the question:

What do the informant's statements reveal about his feelings and perceptions and what inferences can be made from them about the actual environment or event he has experienced? (Dexter, 1970: 131).

The interviewer was well prepared with good knowledge of the interviewee and the facts from primary and secondary sources. When interviewing elites, elites often assume that the interviewer has read what is already published on issues and is aware of the political and economic background (Walford, 1994). Leech suggested that the interviewer of elites should be professional and less knowledgeable than the respondent (2002). Interviewees can also exercise caution, e.g. an OECD interviewee appeared to be very sensitive to Irish politics in offering their answers.

4.5 Data Collection

4.5.1 Data from Policy Documents

Once the discourse and content analysis of the 'UCD Strategic Plan 2005-8' was completed, interviewing commenced in May 2008. Textual data was collected by firstly selecting the set of texts at play in the organisations strategy. Second, the ways in which dominant logics are constructed through the production of those texts was explored. Finally, the actors influential in this process were identified (Phillips *et al.*, 2008). UCD's 2005-8 Strategic Plan

was the primary research document as it formally announced UCD's intention to modularise. To assist with understanding the discourse and policies which informed this document directly or indirectly, a framework was created which traced the different discourses and their origins from this plan. (See Appendix Nine). Both a Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) and a thematic content analysis were applied to this Strategic Plan, the policy documents listed in Appendix Fifteen and the interview transcripts. A CDA of 'UCD Strategic Plan 2005-8' was conducted first and informed the semi-structured interviews.

4.5.2 Interviews

An overview of data collection by semi-structured interview is provided.

4.5.2.1 Selection of Interviewees

To select interviewees, it was first established what the research was about. Next, a sampling frame was listed which was representative of the target population, based upon who was known to be involved in the policy process at UCD at the time of programme modularisation. Interviewees were selected using theoretical sampling, on the basis of their involvement in the production or implementation of policy at different levels. Candidates were invited to participate in the study by letter/email in this study under the supervision of Professor Paterson at the University of Edinburgh. By highlighting that the study was being supervised at Edinburgh, it was hoped this would allay some of the misgivings interviewees may have about sharing their experiences with a UCD staff member/ student researcher.

At UCD, interviewees were selected for their direct involvement with production and implementation of modularisation. Based on these interviews, it was possible to identify others involved nationally or supranationally. This snowballing was useful in identifying those active in the policy process and information in policy documents corroborated those suggested as suitable candidates. National level higher education policy is a small community and those working in the field easily identified influential colleagues in other organisations. Representatives of the HEA, IUA and the DES were invited on the basis that they were cited as influential on UCD's policy. Policy officers and policy consultants at the OECD in Paris, and the European Commission and EUA at Brussels, were met to gain an insight into how they engaged UCD and Irish state machinery.

The number of people interviewed was based on the purpose of the study. Admittedly, this is a small study compared to large statistic studies. However, in-depth interviewing with key personnel who were influential in the policy process was more relevant to this study. Generally, the findings of the interview transcripts and the policy documents were triangulated, suggesting a suitable number of interviewees were approached. In total, 24 out of the 26 targeted interviewees agreed to participate. 23 interviews were completed, as two interviewees (the two from the European Commission) requested to be interviewed together. The President of UCD declined to be interviewed. A second interviewee at the European Commission was unable to be interviewed due to work commitments. See Appendix Eight for those interviewed and the length of each interview.

4.5.2.2 Pilot Interviews

Two pilot interviews were carried out prior to the data collection stage to test the style of interview approach. The first interview followed a restrictive schedule, with set prior questions identified which overly constricted the interviewer/interviewee interaction and did not facilitate the probing of responses. The second interview adopted a semi-structured approach and yielded a greater amount of relevant data. The second pilot interview was included as part of the project's data.

4.5.2.3 Interview Protocol

An information sheet was provided to each interviewee before the interview. Upon interviewee consent, interviews were digitally recorded with an MP3 player. Using a recorder can inhibit dialogue but is the most practical method of gathering accurate data (Lilleker, 2003). It allows data collection reliably and the transcripts from the recordings allowed for coding to be completed. Where necessary, some interviewees were contacted by email after the transcript was prepared, if queries were outstanding. (See Appendix Eight for a listing of interviewees). These emails were treated as data and coded with other data sources. Interviews were carried out from May 2008 until April 2009 in the offices of the respective interviewees in Dublin, Paris and Brussels. Conducting the interview in the interviewee's office was beneficial, as they often offered secondary data which might not have been offered otherwise. One interview was completed using Skype, as the interviewee was residing in Kosovo. One later interview was conducted in September 2009.

4.5.2.4 Limitations to Interviewing

There are some limitations to using semi-structured interviews. Firstly, the social actor's perception of their situation in a certain context is interpreted. The findings became my 'interpretation of an interpretation' (Hollis, 1999). Secondly, I influenced respondents' replies. As an 'insider' in UCD, I had a rapport with the interviewees from the School of Business. In interviewing those from UCD, I may have been perceived as either an 'insider' or 'outsider'. This may have influenced the responses participants gave. My age and gender may also have influenced how interviewees perceived me. These issues are explored in my reflective diary, which helped me capture the dynamics of the interview and memories which were not captured by the digital recordings. It was a useful resource to return to as I completed my findings analysis. It also helped to further triangulate findings from other data sources.

4.5.3 Secondary Sources

Secondary sources contributed to the research and included newspaper articles reporting key events, internal policy documents, institutional reports, ministerial speeches and television interviews. These secondary resources were sourced because they were mentioned by interviewees. Having completed the CDA and content analysis, it sensitised me to modes of expression and rhetorical language which originated in other locations. A list of all secondary sources drawn upon is provided in Appendix Fifteen.

4.5.4 Data collection problems

As outlined, one key interviewee at UCD declined to be interviewed. This decline illustrates how political the issue was and how his role involved managing external relations of the institution more than engaging with scholarly institutional pursuits. While often a limitation in conducting elite interviews, it is possible to draw information on those who remain uninterviewed (Goldstein, 2002). Information was sourced through public records of interviews. Interviews between Dr Brady and other interviewers were drawn upon for this study. (See Appendix Fifteen).

There was one interview with a senior policy-maker at UCD which was difficult to conduct, despite consent to the interview, due to the individual's schedule. In order to expedite the scheduling of the interview, some key themes to be addressed during the interview, including the nature of relations with other national policy actors were highlighted and this appeared to elicit the granting of the interview.

Generally, the interviews were successfully conducted. One interviewee from UCD School of Business was particularly hostile during the interview, e.g. there was a palpable aggression at the beginning of the interview. The interviewee had not read the email invitation to the interview which requested it would be recorded and suggested the researcher was unethically trying to record the interview. Also, some information provided during interview conflicted with what other interviewees stated. Despite the intimidating approach, the interview proceeded and I recalled best practice regarding the asking of difficult questions (Leech, 2002; Woliver, 2002). For example, questions were politely rephrased and repeated. The interview

ended with the question 'Is there anything that you would like to add which I haven't asked you?'. A copy of the transcript was forwarded for review as recommended by Woliver (2002). Upon receipt of the verified transcript, she substantially revised the transcript. This alteration provided an interesting insight into this interviewee's 'reality' of the policy process and relationship between the School and UCD Central Administration. The amended transcript was analysed as the research was phenomenological and it was necessary to use the amended transcript as her perception of the process. (See Section 4.4.2.1 regarding the analysis of a respondent's perceptions). While the amended transcript was used, the researcher was mindful during the analysis of the transcript of the discrepancies between the two and the insight this provided into this interviewee's experience. There was no simple ethical resolution offered by the literature to this difficult scenario. After the interview, and again upon receipt of the abridged transcript, the situation was discussed with my supervisor and the above course of action agreed.

4.5.5 Rejection of other methods

Other research designs might have been drawn upon to conduct this research but were considered unsuitable. Surveys would have yielded interesting findings from respondents but would have lacked the depth required. The sampling frame for a survey would have been based on the population of the policy community in UCD and, those involved in Ireland. Those involved with the Irish policy process internationally would also have been identified. Many of the aspects of governance referred to the processes and 'soft tools' of governance which would not have been captured in a survey. Due to the seniority of participants and their availability, this option was not suitable as the softer methods of governance could not be sufficiently explored.

Fairclough (2006) also suggested ethnography as a strong complement to CDA. It was not suitable here as the policy was produced already.

4.6 Managing Ethics

The ethical guidelines from BERA and University of Edinburgh informed the research's design and practical execution. At UCD, the 'Human Research Sub Committee' assessed the research proposal and exempted it from formal approval requirements. Ethical approval was attained through the 'Postgraduate Ethical Committee' at Moray House School of Education. Formal access to UCD was requested and granted by UCD's Registrar in August 2007. This formal request was to overtly declare my research.

A decision was made not to anonymise the institutions. UCD is distinct in its profile as an Irish tertiary level institution. Without the provision of its name, it would still be recognisable. Not naming the research site limits the information provided regarding the case, its character, its history, etc. Naming the site allowed a greater provision of background information, adding to the contextual understanding of this topic. Due to the seniority of respondents, it was critical to the research to understand what contribution each respondent, and/or their affiliated organisation, was making to the production of policy. To capture this, it was deemed pivotal to the research to include the interviewees' job title and organisation. Only one interviewee requested their comments remain unattributable.

Permission to record the interviews was granted by each participant in writing at the beginning of the interview, after the purpose of the interview had been outlined. A consent form provided interviewees with information

on the intended use of the research prior to the interview. (See Appendix Five for a sample of this consent form). Thus, candidates were made aware that while names would be omitted from the study, job titles and institutions would be named in the final publication. By including the job title, it allowed for a more insightful description of the policy process and how the different agents interacted with each other. Quotes were selected which exemplified the policy process as perceived by the interviewees and were used to write-up Chapter 5. Full quotes from interviewees were used as much as possible. Where a minority perspective was provided, this is highlighted.

4.6.1 Positioning of Researcher

A study of this nature reveals a set of normative predispositions, emanating from the researcher related with how society should be structured and by whom (Moyser and Wagstaffe, 1987). Data is never entirely free of the values, theoretical presumptions and researcher assumptions (Seale, 1999). The concept of reflexivity requires transparent acknowledgement of the researcher's positionality and awareness of the importance for data collection and its analysis. Bourdieu *et al.* (1999b) rejected the idea of epistemological innocence and encourages an investigation of value stances, their problem choice and the theoretical and methodological frames engaged in. Interventions were made to demonstrate self-awareness and self-criticism during the research process. Reflexivity is understood as the conscious disclosure of the role of values held by the researcher's of methodology, data collection, analysis and reporting of research (Shacklock and Smyth, 1998).

To this end, I outline my interests and my biases which may have affected data interpretation. UCD has experienced a number of highly publicised changes since 2004. (See Chapter 2). I studied at UCD from 1997 until 2002

and worked at the School of Business in academic and management capacities since 2002. Despite the negative attention these changes generally received, I was broadly supportive of these reforms. Also, I am supportive of the wider European Project and the EU. I appreciate the benefits of an increasingly federal Europe and witnessed the generally positive contribution of EU membership for Ireland, socially and economically.

Despite the awareness of positionality, a case study approach remains particularly prone to problems of observer bias (Nisbet and Watt, 1984). Researching within your location of employment is challenging (Morse, 1998:61) and presents ethical considerations. Working at UCD led to a body of tacit knowledge which informed understanding of the research site and assisted data collection. This tacit knowledge informed my understanding of institutional language in the transcribed and validated interviews. Often, there are advantages to researching familiar settings, e.g. the relative lack of disorientation, possibility of enhanced rapport and communication with interviewees, ability to gauge the honesty and accuracy of responses (Hockey, 1993). These are juxtaposed with the problems of insider research, e.g. over-familiarity or taken for granted assumptions. As the data was collected, I attempted to be a 'self-reflective practitioner', self-aware of bias to the situation, willing to look at the situation from different viewpoints and prepared to reflect (Elliot, 1988).

Research involving work colleagues and other professionals creates different issues for work-based practitioners as their colleagues become research subjects and return to being colleagues at a later stage (Costley and Gibbs, 2006; Nielsen and Repstad, 1993). Such positioning is conceived as the 'insider/outsider' dilemma. An insider is defined as a researcher who has 'a

priori' knowledge of a community and its members; an outsider does not (Merton, 1972). Insiders can be seen as being too close to the topic and lack the objectivity. Conversely, it can be advantageous to be an insider, as they are 'native to the setting', and enjoy advantages with access and pre-understanding of the organisation also (Brannick and Coghlan, 2007; Nielsen and Repstad, 1993). The dichotomy between insider-outsider research is over-simplified and it is more often the case that those researching their own places of employment, become insiders and outsiders at different points in their research (Hellowell, 2006). This was the case here as I interviewed those with whom I worked at the School of Business. My position did not involve regular contact with those working centrally at UCD. Due to the range of national and international organisations involved, different standpoints were experienced as I reflected on my own perceptions of how I related to the different interviewees. While I could be viewed as an 'insider' by some in UCD, I was likely to be perceived as an 'outsider' by the national and supranational agencies visited.

Keeping a research diary was critical to reflecting upon this dynamic. This self-reflection was useful as it helped examination of assumptions of the situation and bias. It assisted in realising and critically reflecting upon the participants' perceptions of the research relationship. An attempt to document my own position at different stages in the research process is available below, using Le Gallais's continuum of insider-outsider positions (2003). For example, taking both extremes of the spectrum, the interaction at interviews was different where I was interviewing colleagues, than when I was interviewing at OECD. Both extremes carried benefits and limitations as outlined:

Table 4.1 Insider-Outsider Continuum

Position on the continuum	Potential benefits and pitfalls
Peer to the respondents	<i>Benefits:</i> Potential for achieving in-depth empathetic access to and interpretation of data. Ability of 'invisibility' of insider researcher. <i>Limitations:</i> Danger of over-familiarity, increased risk of bias and presumption of knowledge by both researcher and respondent.
Known to and knowing the respondents.	<i>Benefit:</i> Potential for enhanced rapport and ability to assess veracity of data. <i>Limitations:</i> Issues of role and relationships with the researched as colleague/researcher. Researcher may 'select' sympathetic respondents, thereby skewing the responses.
Knowledge of working within the policy area.	<i>Benefits:</i> Less likelihood of 'culture shock.' Appreciation of the 'language' of the group being researched. 'A priori' knowledge aids naturalness of interaction. <i>Limitations:</i> Research may be hampered by partial knowledge and presumptions on the part of researcher and/or researched. Familiarity with research focus may lead researcher to presume that others are of like mind and to miss the commonplace.
Awareness of the culture and climate of the location.	<i>Benefit:</i> Familiarity with the culture aids understanding of the potential vulnerability of the respondents. <i>Limitations:</i> this can lead to 'taken for granted assumptions'. My experience of the institutional culture at UCD also may influence my approach.
Knowledge of the general location of the research.	This knowledge helps with a general understanding of the location of the research but offers partial status as an insider researcher.
Knowledge of the world of higher education in Ireland	<i>Benefit:</i> Good experience from working in UCD. <i>Limitation:</i> HEI's in Ireland are a very disparate group of educational establishments. UCD would not be thought of as typical.
No knowledge of supranational agencies	<i>Benefit:</i> No baggage in dealing with these agencies directly. It is likely that I was seen as an outsider in these organisations. <i>Limitations:</i> Danger of preconceived perceptions about these organisations and the way they operate.
Knowledge of the world of education	<i>Benefit</i> This position enabled appreciation of pressures upon specific institutions and the issues surrounding education such as governance, policy production, etc. <i>Limitations:</i> Possibility of assumptions based on knowledge.
No knowledge of the field of research	<i>Benefit:</i> No baggage to encumber the researcher, enabling the researcher to enter the research field without preconceptions. In practice there is the potential to be influenced by stereotypes, which cannot be counterbalanced by personal experience. It would also be hard for such an outsider to appreciate the experiences of those researched 'as nearly as possible as its participants live it', <i>Limitation:</i> Less understanding of the organisation.

(Adapted from La Gallais, 2003)

Undertaking this research as a student at the University of Edinburgh was also beneficial, given that the primary research site was my place of employment. This distanced me in some respects from the UCD from a research perspective and allowed greater insights to its study.

4. 7 Data Analysis

To analyse the data, a critical discourse analysis and content analysis were used.

4.7.1. Critical Discourse Analysis

A discourse creates a social position from which participants are invited (or summoned) to speak, listen, act, read, work, think, feel and behave (Gee and Lankshear, 1995). Discourse uses language to generate results and meanings. Critical discourse analysis (CDA) is context sensitive, acknowledging the document's social and historical context. CDA is very relevant to the investigation of power and power is relevant here, as the power to influence university policy is the focus of this study. There are different schools of discourse analysis, which evolved from cognitive psychology, socio-linguistics, linguistics and poststructuralism. CDA explores:

... how texts construct representations of the world, social relationships, and social identities, and there is an emphasis on highlighting how such practise and texts are ideologically shaped by relations of power (Taylor, 2004:435).

Scholars conceptualise societies, institutions, and identities as constructed discursively (Hardy, 2001). Thus, CDA is important to the research of policy and governance. It is characterised by a realist social ontology, suggesting both abstract social structures and concrete social events are part of reality.

There is a dialectic view of the relationship between structure and agency and the connection between discourse and other elements of social practices, whereby the contradiction between these two conflicting forces is viewed as the determining factor in their continuing interaction. Social science is influenced by the socio-constructivist approach, which emphasises the role of texts in the creation of this social world. The realist approach suggests social components of this world, e.g. institutions are socially constructed and become a reality, affecting the social world's textual construction. Thus, UCD as an institution is socially constructed by a range of agents. Its construction informs how UCD is written about, which informs how UCD is constructed. Policy documents inform how UCD is perceived and how agents engage with it. Muetzenfeldt (1992:2) suggested:

On the one hand, the various projects of state institution, party politics and social movement draw on the social categories, resources and meanings (i.e. discourses) that are made available and reproduced through the culture and practices of the wider society. On the other hand, those same political projects simultaneously impact upon the wider society: they shape social categories, position people within them, and mould the categories of citizenship through which people are brought into particular relationships with the state and politics.

By using a critical methodology, knowledge is provided that engages the current social structures. Power is important in looking at UCD's policy process. External agencies are discussed in the academic literature as exercising power over the national state and universities. Analysing how power is embodied in the discourse of policy documents and interview transcripts explains the nature of the relationships between the stakeholders and institutions. In the organisational context, CDA traces how discourse constructs and maintains phenomena, e.g. globalisation. It is concerned with

the linguistic character of the cultural and social processes (Wodak, 1996) and with power-relations, as highlighted by Foucault and Bourdieu. It analyses power in discourse and power over discourse. However, CDA is limited as an approach and to research 'meaning making', interviews were conducted. CDA assisted with analysis of discourse but it did not provide an insight into the circumstances where it was created. Consequently, interviews assisted in providing a more in-depth study.

Fairclough (1992; 1989; 2001) developed CDA in reply to early analytical methods which were narrowly defined in terms of micro-linguistic aspects of discourse, neglecting the macro social aspects. It is necessary to establish a methodological relationship between the macro level of social structure and the micro level of everyday language (Fairclough, 1992). Fairclough treated language as a form of social practice, where discourse is shaped and inhibited by social structures and where discursive practice is concurrently shaped by the social structures constraining it (Phillips *et al.*, 2008). Thus, discourse relates to all levels of social structure that can constrain it, e.g. page 4 of the UCD Strategic Plan states:

The *OECD Review of Higher Education in Ireland* and the reports of the Enterprise Strategy Group and the British Academy provide an important public policy context for this Strategic Plan (UCD, 2005a:4) .

This exemplifies how discourse can represent social structures and how social structures relate to each other. This example illustrates the status awarded to particular agencies, such as the British Academy by UCD, providing insight into UCD's policy relationships.

Thus, discourse becomes both an object and a practice. Discourse is acting on the individual meaning making through the process of texts. CDA conceives three groups of social phenomenon which are produced. First, the subject positions are locations in social space from which the actors produce texts. Different subject positions relate to rights to produce texts, with some having a louder voice than others (Potter and Wetherell, 1987). Inhabiting particular subject positions provides actors with a degree of agency in producing texts that might affect discourse in the future (Phillips *et al.*, 2008). Second, discourse creates sets of concepts through which we understand the world and relate to one another. CDA suggests that such social constructions occur from the structured categories of text which are established as ideas. Discourse can be intended as attempts to fashion preferable social relations. These discourses are dependent on resources, e.g. access to routes of dissemination, available to those agents producing the text. Finally, discourse has been constituted as an object when it is used to make sense of social relations. The discourse becomes a tangible and visible entity and the analysis of such objects provides an insight into power. Using this example above, the naming of these organisations in its own right provides an insight into what agencies were influential over UCD's policy process. The use of the word 'important' gives us the sense that these organisations had some power or influence over how the university's decisions were made.

There are limitations associated with CDA. First, discourse analysis involves major data-management issues because of the volume of data that is often available. Documents involved in analysis included emails, interview transcripts, policy documents and newspapers articles. Such documents can be numerous and require either sampling or an innovative approach to data

management (Phillips *et al.*, 2008). A data analysis management system was established to pursue a rigorous and transparent approach to data collection and analysis. (See Sections 4.5 and 4.7). Second, though historians have been analysing discourse for decades, CDA is a relatively new area of research activity so there are few standard models available to follow. Third, in drawing on the tools of CDA, the researcher was not a linguist by training.

4.7.2 Content Analysis

A content analysis was also used to analyse interview transcripts and policy documents. Content analysis:

... uses a set of procedures to make valid inferences from text. These inferences are about the senders (s) of the message, the message itself or the audience of the message. (Weber, 1990:9)

The analysis was iterative, moving backwards and forward between the words in each data source, and the emergent categories. This approach allowed themes and content to be quantifiably analysed, providing an insight into the frequency to which themes, words and actors were referred to. It was used to quantify the content of key documents and interview transcripts systematically. This approach highlights the researcher's role in the construction of meaning in and of the texts (Bryman and Bell, 2003). It allows categories to emerge from the data, and to analyse them, in terms of the context in which they are located. The validity of the approach was established, firstly, on the basis of the concepts, methods and data, and secondly on the basis of the generalisability of the results and theory drawn from the data. Validity of the classification scheme was sought; there was a correspondence between the category and the concept it represented. In

addition to the validity of content analysis, reliability of the method was also important. There are three types of reliability relevant: stability, reproducibility, and accuracy (Krippendorff, 1980). Stability refers to consistency of the results when the same content is coded on more than one occasion by the same coder. Reproducibility refers to the extent to which the classification of content produces the same results when coded by more than one individual. Accuracy means that the classification of the text matches to a standard. One of the limitations associated with content analysis occurs during the data-reduction process when many words of texts are categorised into too few categories (Weber, 1990). This creates difficulties with the consistency of categorisation. Coding rules were established in the coding manual to overcome this. The number of coding categories was refined to fifteen.

4.7.3 Data Preparation, Coding and Analysis

The unit of analysis was themes (words, phrases and sentences). This coding or categorisation is a process whereby tags or labels are allocated to units of meaning to the descriptive or inferential information compiled during a study (Basit, 2003).

4.7.4 Use of Technology in Data Analysis

To maintain rigour and transparency, QSR NVivo 8.0 was used to code the data. Both manual coding and computerised coding are time consuming (Basit, 2003). Manual coding was initially attempted but this software allowed more sophisticated data management. Using the software enhanced the transparency of the process, evidence and argument (Crowley *et al.*, 2002). Gilbert (2002) highlighted the potential difficulty in maintaining

closeness to the data using electronic coding but interventions were made to overcome this. Listening to the interviews, transcription, reviewing the policy documents and working through the coding ensured 'closeness' to the data. The option to 'auto-code' data was avoided to prevent any distancing from the data.

4.7.5. Data Analysis Process

Phenomenological research assumes that while individuals react differently to an experience, there is some commonality in human experience and that it is possible to investigate this commonality. This is also called an 'essence' or essential characteristic of an experience (Johnson and Christensen, 2007). Essential structures of governance and policy phenomena were reviewed by studying examples of it and reviewing what similar experiences different participants had. Interviews were transcribed and these transcriptions, coupled with the identified policy documents, were used to study the phenomena. Significant statements were studied and analysed using content and discourse analysis. Statements were determined as significant if they were clearly related to the research question and objectives. Once statements were extracted, they were assembled into themes.

Data was indexed and then open coded as it was gathered to ensure that information was correctly recalled. A number of statements were not easily categorised as they were not in keeping with the coding themes. These were considered 'outliers' and were included in the analysis. A coding schedule was used to analyse documents and transcripts. It demonstrates the principles used for analysis and the coding manual provides a statement of

specifications regarding the categories used to classify the data. (See Appendix Ten for the coding manual).

The four stages to data analysis adopted were: comprehending, synthesising, theorising and recontextualising (Morse, 1994; 1998). These phases provided a sequential guide to analysis.

4.7.5.1 Comprehending

As primary research was completed, the information was recorded to provide an accurate insight to participants' experiences of the policy process. To attain maximum understanding of the data collected, three conditions were adhered to. First, given that the researcher was familiar with the research site, precautions were taken to avoid threats to validity, e.g. by minimising bias as outlined (Morse, 1994). (See Section 4.6). Secondly, the researcher was able to acquire all material relevant to the subject topic prior to data collection and this was facilitated through the production of the literature review. Finally, the participants were willing to share their insight with the researcher. This data collection stage was completed when the interviewer was attaining very little new information and the researcher began to see similar answers to questions asked (Morse, 1994: 30). As outlined, field notes were recorded to ensure that observations were separate to interpretation of them (Seale, 1999).

As indicated the policy analysis was completed using content and CDA and then the semi-structured interviews were conducted, transcribed and analysed using a similar approach. Reductive analysis guided the analysis and the identification, codification and categorisation of data into significant units was used to classify the invariant themes and patterns within the data.

In the case of the interviews, the findings were transcribed verbatim and provided to interviewees. In transcribing the interviews, a conversational analysis approach was not used to transcribe the data. Pauses were generally not recorded and speech patterns were left as unannotated text because it was the macro information which was of interest. Next, the data was annotated in hard copy. Policies and interview transcripts were annotated to include insights and impressions in the right hand margin of each piece of data collected. Initial references were made to other pieces of data collected. This prepared the groundwork for more systematic and thorough analysis (Dey, 1993). Capturing such impressions and insights provoked fresh approaches and directions for analysis.

Having annotated the data, data coding began. Categories were created in advance of coding, though they were refined and re-organised during the analysis stage in an iterative process with the data. Categories and nodes assisted review of the similarities and differences between the content of the data, to identify generalisable patterns. To group data, a set of criteria for categories was developed and then nodes were developed as part of the categories. Low inference descriptors were used to code the data to make the data coding transparent. The themes used for coding are drawn from the academic literature and from the policy analysis and interviews. Coding in this way brought together observations that were considered similar in the data sources. The allocation of nodes was not exclusive and different components of data were assigned to a number of different categories, where relevant, e.g. the node 'Learning Outcomes' was used to code any discussion or reference to learning outcomes. This node (i.e. a code) was attached to both the 'Bologna' and 'Teaching and Learning' tree nodes (i.e. categories) as

learning outcomes were discussed by interviewees as relating to the Bologna Process and to the endeavours for better 'Teaching and Learning' in UCD. Other nodes were established for infrequent references to different agencies, e.g. CONAHEC or AACSB. While these nodes appeared very infrequently, they are still important as they provide an insight into the influences over different agents. The fact that different agencies responded to different external agencies in the US is in itself a finding and could not be trivialised, despite the fact it did not emerge with greater frequency from the interviews. The coding manual helped redress interpretation of the data and subsequent coding. Preparing and utilising this manually forced a more explicit, rigorous and reflective approach to analysis. Using the assistance of other individuals (both colleagues and friends) helped improve the reliability of the coding. A sample of a transcript was provided to two individuals with a copy of the coding manual. Their insights into coding the document using the manual assisted with the development of a more rigorous approach to coding. A section of a coded transcript is available in Appendix Three.

The reason for the detailed coding was that some of the power exerted and the relationships between different agents are not explicit. A detailed approach to data coding allowed these relationships, and the power between agents to become more apparent, e.g. the Irish state's relationship with the European Commission and the OECD were indiscernible until the data was coded and their association became more observable. As acknowledged, one cited criticisms of coding qualitative data is the possible loss of context of what is said. Bryman and Bell (2007:536) suggested a general resistance to codification by discourse analysts due to the 'analytical mentality' of the research style (citing Potter). However, coding the data provided an

opportunity to rigorously review the data and to identify patterns within it. It also was an exercise in familiarisation with the documents as data. In coding the data, broad and overlapping categories emerged, rather than comprehensive ones. There were 244 nodes, organised into fifteen tree nodes. (See Appendix Ten). It was decided not to have too many nodes, as not all nodes would be remembered during data coding, impeding coding and its transparency.

4.7.5.2 Synthesising

Having coded the data, the synthesis stage commenced and efforts were made to link the various experiential descriptions of participants of the policy process using thematic analysis and the common structures of a particular experience (Morse, 1994). Synthesising involves the merging of several 'stories', experiences or cases to describe a typical composite pattern of behaviour or response (Morse, 1994: 30). Through this process, the researcher was aware of the significance of critical factors and explained these with alternate 'stories' from the data. Data was coded and then the units of analysis with the same nodes and categories were extracted from the disparate research artefacts and assembled together. Having completed the initial coding of data, a series of tree nodes were assembled which organised nodes into categories, e.g. the national agents were coded under by organisation, for example the Higher Education Authority. These organisations were grouped together under the tree node 'National Agents'. The tree node 'National Agents' was a sub-tree node of the node 'Agents'.

When all the nodes were categorised, a report was prepared containing all the coded information from the interviews and documents for each tree node. Each of these fifteen reports were read and re-read to look for patterns

or outliers. After studying these reports, a narrative was prepared which drew together the important points from the respective nodes. This generated fifteen narratives, highlighting the themes arising from the data collected. These reports were prepared in Word, as Nvivo did not give the flexibility to prepare these reports. Some of these nodes created, e.g. the 'Higher Education Authority', were obvious and this emerged during the preparation of the narrative reports. Other nodes created appeared to be of less explicit importance but having reviewed the data, were of importance. For example, the node 'Strategic Innovative Fund' first appeared to be a node of little importance but having reviewed it in the context of the narrative reports, it became clear that the 'Strategic Innovative Fund' was a financial incentive to encourage universities to modularise using Ministerial funds. Finally, a single report was created based on the individual fifteen reports. This report became Chapter 5 of the thesis.

4.7.5.3 Theorising and Recontextualising

'Theory gives qualitative data structure. Theory gives qualitative findings application' (Morse, 1994:32). Theorising was done by phenomenological writing and re-writing of the re-accounted experiences. The theory helped provide the best complete, rational and simplest model for linking diverse and disparate information in a useful, practical way. Having written the findings chapter, an explanation was formulated to make sense of the relationship of UCD's modularisation policy to national and international policy agendas. Then, the literature review was returned to and the literature was updated with recent publications and articles. The data and theory were reviewed in light of current theory on global education policy and how policy affects universities and their governance. This was an iterative process where the generated theory provided some structure but was

recontextualised to make sense of education policy in more general settings. Recontextualisation is defined as the development of the emerging theory so that theory is applicable to other settings and to other populations (Morse, 1994:34).

The logic was that previously established theory recontextualised the new findings and the discipline would advance. Thus, the researcher attempted to provide a rationale that explains both the findings at UCD based upon the lived experience of others of this policy process but also previous and future studies of education policy. Having reviewed the preparation of these findings, there are a number limitations and restrictions, constraining the study's conclusions.

4.8 Research Limitations

In reviewing the parameters of this research design, some limitations are acknowledged;

- 1) This research only reviews the production of policy at UCD with a view to its modularisation policy. Other policies which might exemplify evidence of influence of supranational bodies on institutional dynamics, e.g. academic restructuring, were not investigated. Equally, the modularisation of other Irish HEIs or abroad was not researched, limiting the scope of this research.
- 2) Implementation of the policy of modularisation began in September 2005. Some of the experiences of those interviewed are based on the respondents' recollections of this time. Recollections might have since been influenced by media, public debate, etc. As this research is about

investigating perceptions of a process, in this case the policy process, its design is vulnerable to critique of being affected by the double hermeneutic.

- 3) This research was completed while I was an UCD employee. As a result, my rapport with some respondents influenced the interview results. The benefits and limitations of my familiarity with some interviewees are explored in Table 4.6.1.
- 4) The policy process is evidenced by implementation but this research is not looking at implementation. It investigates a segmentation of the policy process called policy initiation though this might be called policy implementation by some. (See Chapter 2.1) It focused on a segment of the policy process centred on UCD Horizons.
- 5) The study did not interview students at UCD. Students in Ireland are not involved in the policy process which is the focus of the study. A former Education Officer of the Union of Students in Ireland was interviewed due to her policy role as a Bologna Promoter and member of the Irish Higher Education Quality Network.
- 6) The interviewees participating in the study affected the validity of the findings and its parameters. Interviewees were identified due to their key role in the production of education policy at an institutional, national or international level. The President of UCD chose not to participate in the study.

4.9 Conclusion

A critical realism ontological outlook with a hermetical phenomenological epistemology was used to inform this study. A qualitative methodology was selected to address the research question and research objectives, using multiple data collection methods. The research methods included the semi-structured interview and document analysis. The following chapter provides the findings of this research. The findings are organised under seven themes; 'UCD Horizons', 'The institutional context and international policy', 'The Modularisation Process', 'Higher Education in Ireland: the national policy field', 'The Bologna Process: A European Policy Field', 'Higher Education Policy Mechanisms' and 'Gatekeepers and Change-makers'.

CHAPTER FIVE – RESEARCH FINDINGS

5.0 Introduction

This study investigates how supranational processes affected UCD's institutional dynamics and policy process. Here, modularisation is studied, not to investigate it as an activity per se, but to exemplify how global policy can affect institutions. In this study, modularisation was not about pedagogical developments on university programmes but about changes in academic governance and the policy process. As outlined in Chapter 2, the introduction of modularisation, labelled 'UCD Horizons', is used to explore the local, institutional, national and international policy processes which contributed to shaping 'UCD Horizons'. An analysis of data collected during the semi-structured interviews with policy actors about their experience of the policy process, and documentary policy analysis is outlined. This chapter provides representative extracts from the data and the key thematic abstractions developed during its analysis. Broadly, there are three elements to this chapter: what was the 'Horizons' programme; where did it come from; and how it did get to UCD.

Sections 5.1, 5.2 and 5.3 provide an insight into the origins and evidence of UCD's modularisation and the policy process involved in its introduction. Section 5.1 explains 'UCD Horizons' and the origins of UCD's

modularisation and semesterisation initiatives. Section 5.2 outlines UCD's institutional policy landscape prior to and during 2005, as perceived by the interviewees. It highlights UCD's fragmented policy context prior to the modularisation of programmes. In Section 5.3, the influences on UCD's policy process during the implementation of modularisation were explored based on the experience of interviewees. Particularly, the changes in governance at the School of Business are highlighted. The rest of the chapter provides an insight into the process by which the policy of modularisation was conceived and disseminated. Sections 5.4 and 5.5 explore the question of 'how did it got there', by reviewing the explicit and implicit influences referred to by interviewees and policy documents. Principally, the implicit power exhibited by international agencies, including the OECD, the EUA and the European Commission (through its involvement with the Bologna Process), is explored. Section 5.5 explores the Bologna Process because of the latent influence it implicitly exerted over UCD, and the Irish policy process. In Chapter 3.2.3, Dale's (1999) external policy mechanisms influencing nations are discussed. This framework is employed to review Ireland's and UCD's policy process in Section 5.6. As outlined in Chapter 4.6, quotes are drawn upon from interviewees and/or policy documents throughout this chapter to appropriately exemplify UCD's policy process. The quotes included were selected as they were generally typical of the data collected. Minority perspectives are stressed accordingly.

5.1. UCD Horizons

In 2005, UCD branded its modularised undergraduate programme initiative, 'UCD Horizons'. A key message was the opportunity for students to shape 'their own degree' by selecting modules of interest, coupled with study abroad:

Launched in 2005, UCD Horizons places UCD in the vanguard of leading universities by providing flexible, modular learning degrees that offer you, the student, choices rather than constraints. We're the first Irish university to adopt this system fully and we hope you'll benefit from the freedom and diversity it offers you. UCD Horizons is the name given to the structure for undergraduate taught degrees at UCD. The UCD Horizons programme is modular and based on credits. This is much more flexible than traditional degree structures and allows you to individualise your studies. With UCD Horizons you select your preferred degree as usual through the CAO system, but when you arrive at UCD you will have greater flexibility and choice in how and what you study within your chosen degree. Rather than entering a fixed degree programme, where you will know in September 2009 precisely what you will be studying in March 2012, UCD offers you the opportunity to get involved in shaping your own degree. As the modular, credit-based system is aligned to best international standards; it also makes it much easier if you want to study abroad for part of your degree. (UCD, 2009a)

'UCD Horizons' is a fully modular, semesterised, credit-based accumulation curriculum. Undergraduate programmes were organised into 3 stages of 60 ECTS credits. Undergraduate degree modules were generally weighted with 5 European Credit Transfer System Credits (ECTS) and students undertook twelve modules per stage (UCD, 2006:1). Students could select up to two 5 ECTS 'electives' of the twelve modules at each stage from different disciplines (UCD, 2006:10). Prospective students previewed the core and 'elective' module options online, using module descriptors.

Modularisation established a unique selling point for UCD, as 'the first Irish university to adopt this [modular] system fully' (see above). It was advertised, using a large media campaign, as 'different from other systems' in four aspects: semesterisation, student-centred approach, credit-based and

elective choice. Modularisation was introduced:

... probably at a strategic level, clearly the President had intentions, in terms of how the university would develop and so, I think, some of that, and in the case of modularisation, was about taking hold of something which had been quite disparate and individuals across the colleges and pulling it together as a strategic issue and as a way of I think, strategically positioning UCD because I think if you look at it from the outside then, modularisation got branded. It got called 'Horizons'. It was pitched in a very particular way to emphasise the flexibility, as well as the kind of depth or notion of academic standards. So, I think it was very carefully positioned (I.8).

In 2005, UCD was Ireland's most diverse university and modularisation allowed UCD to capitalise upon its disciplinary diversity. Modularisation was designed to allow UCD 'compete successfully for the best students by offering an attractive and fully modularised suite of degree programmes' (UCD, 2005a:8). While 'UCD Horizons' was a major reform, interviewees acknowledged the initiative as substantive, but limited. The marketing of Horizons was perceived as successful but interviewees believed that it did not fully deliver the extent of flexibility advertised:

... it is one of those things that is very attractive to potential students and to schools but I do feel that they over played it. It was a card that was overplayed. It was driven by the marketeers and the strategists and I think, they really didn't anticipate the extent to which we couldn't fully deliver on that (Unattributed).

5.2 The institutional context and international policy

Having reviewed UCD Horizons, the perceived rationale for its introduction and UCD's prior curricular structure is discussed.

5.2.1. Rationale Driving Modularisation

Modularisation was perceived to be central to the university's reform process, driven internally by the new President and Registrar. Interviewees acknowledged that in their experience discussion of the modularising of academic offerings had occurred previously but it was not until these appointments that it commenced. The President perceived that such reform was required for UCD's development:

Hugh Brady: UCD has throughout its history played a key role in the development of all aspects of Irish society whether cultural, social or economic and it must continue to do so. It must remain the engine room for both social change and economic development. So, if Ireland is to continue to develop, UCD must continue to develop and must drive that change.

Hugh Brady: I think the big challenge is the intensity of the competition, particularly international competition. Competition for the best Irish students, competition for international students, competition for staff and indeed competition for funding. So the context has changed completely (Kenny, 2005:3)³.

This reform was perceived to have consequences not just for UCD but Ireland and its contribution globally:

In short, UCD's Strategic Plan must be bolder and more imaginative than ever before if UCD and Ireland are to compete and succeed in this uncompromisingly competitive context (UCD, 2005a: 5).

We are in the business of producing global citizens (Brady, 2008).

³ As Professor Brady was not available for interview for this study, a number of other interviews with him were sourced. (See Section 4.5.4). The interview from which this quote is taken was published in UCD's Magazine, 'UCD Today'. Any such cited interviews are listed in Appendix Fifteen.

It will be a UCD which is distinctively Irish but with global impact (Brady, 2008)⁴.

The rationale for modularisation was presented in a number of policy documents, including the UCD Strategic Plan 2005-8. This document aimed to establish UCD as a 'leading international research-intensive university' (UCD, 2005a:4). The plan's policy context drew mostly upon external agencies to underpin its new trajectory:

There has been significant input from a variety of external reviews, including two institutional reviews conducted by the European Universities Association (formerly Conference of Rectors of Europe), a review of quality procedures also conducted under the auspices of the European Universities Association and most recently, advice offered in the report of the Washington Advisory Group. The OECD Review of Higher Education in Ireland and the reports of the Enterprise Strategy Group and the British Academy provide an important public policy context for this Strategic Plan (UCD, 2005a: 4).

The IUA Director of Academic Affairs observed that the new Senior Management Team 'felt that unless UCD did something drastic, things couldn't stay the way they were...'. Various external agencies, as above, 'were sources of external back-up, therefore, for what they felt already needed to be done' (I.16). Particularly, the Washington Advisory Group (WAG) and EUA reports recommended that UCD modularise its curriculum. The WAG is a US private corporate, providing advisory reviews to companies, universities, governmental and non-governmental organisations. It was invited by President Brady to review UCD and its review strongly endorsed modularisation:

⁴ The 2008 interview with Hugh Brady quoted was part of the programme 'One-to-One' aired on Raidió Teilifís Éireann.

The Washington Advisory Group believes modularisation and semesterisation will expand student choice and should be implemented as quickly as possible. Advantages include:

- More flexible response to student interests and needs as they select universities,
- Wider access and participation for students in various curricula and in multidisciplinary studies,
- Expanded mobility among major fields of study for students within UCD
- Improved opportunity to accommodate both international students and UCD students seeking a semester of international experience,
- Promotion of interdisciplinary learning,
- Improved autonomy and focus for individual teachers,
- More collaborative programmes, and
- Less duplication of subject offerings for greater overall efficiency

(WAG Report, 2004: III-3)

The EUA also completed two institutional reviews in 1998 and again in 2003, recommending UCD to modularise.

It [EUA reports] is an entirely appropriate international standard and they made the recommendation the first time. That report was effectively buried. I suspect the university looked at and went 'we can't do all that' and the report remained in a desk. They then came back in 2003 and very definitely said two things; one, you didn't do any of the stuff that we said you should do the last time we were here; and two, you are behind, in terms of international agendas.... (I.2).

Both EUA reviews were recognised as pivotal to UCD's reform process and acknowledged as one of the two key drivers behind modularisation. The Registrar acknowledged the second driver was the education and teaching experiences of himself and UCD's President:

The strategic decision was 'our curriculum is monolithic, inflexible, doesn't change and doesn't have any capacity to innovate'. I would say that we both had experience of being teachers in UCD, where because you are one brick in this monolith, you can't change that brick

and it hadn't changed in twenty years. So, the drive was...I think we both separately lit on modularisation, as the key strategic enabler for a whole raft of educational change (I.2).

Their experiences, as UCD students and teachers, and the EUA Reviews directly informed their agenda. This was coupled with their vision to provide an undergraduate education 'philosophically aligned with the Newman and Humbolt view of a university, offering liberal education' (I.2).

5.2.1.1 Perceived Drivers of Change at School level

A number of staff interviewed at the Business School first heard of the university's planned modularisation in the Strategic Plan. When asked about the origins of modularisation and semesterisation, there were four perceived rationales in their experience. First, most associated modularisation with the Bologna Process:

I suppose from a university perspective, I guess modularisation was, as I understand it, was Bologna and the need to have conformity in terms of the curriculum, and programmes and credits, in universities in Ireland, so that students could transfer between universities within Ireland but also outside within the EU (I.7).

...not with a motivation to bring in international students but rather with a motivation to fit our systems better with the European, with Bologna framework, so they [UCD Central Administration] would have been concerned about that (I.9).

Second, modularisation was associated with the desire to 'compete' with other European universities. A modularised curriculum was seen as a prerequisite to UCD's participation in Europe and becoming a 'top European university'. It was perceived that modularisation was essential as Europe

requires curriculum reform in a 'modular form'. The perceived competitive international environment was also highlighted. Providing a modular programme, compliant with Bologna and the US higher education system, was recognised as an opportunity to attract international students. It was conceived that UCD could offer an 'educational' gateway to Europe for the global higher education market (UCD, 2005a: 4), capitalising on education provision through the medium of English.

We just thought given the intensity of not really the national competition, but the global competition, we had no choice but to go the big bang route, if we really wanted to continue to attract the best Irish students but also to bring the really top class international students and academic staff to UCD. We had to be right at the frontier, the forefront (Brady, cited by Murphy, 2006).

The current situation is that Ireland can sell higher education, as Ireland Inc and UCD because the world wants higher education and it wants it in English. And, Ireland has got that. It hasn't got the visa restrictions ...well, it has. But it doesn't have the problems that the US has in allowing foreign students in. It hasn't got the quality assurance that the UK now has, having shot itself in the foot. And it is closer to the old Eastern Bloc than Australia and New Zealand (I.4).

Well, I think with the competitive higher education market now, it is going to be much more competitive like trying to get students because of the demographics of the population, I think the attractiveness of having a university that you can say, you can transfer to other European countries more easily, you can have transferability between courses, that it is a good marketing ploy, at the time when maybe the higher education market has become more consumer oriented and that (I.5).

This internationalisation of the student body was associated with revenue generation and a directive from the President 'to get our act together on internationalisation, if only for income reasons' (I.9). The Dean of the School

of Business acknowledged this as a 'nice confluence' with the pursuit of a 'more diverse student body'. According to the Director of Internationalisation at the School of Business, internationalisation in his experience was associated with:

... fees. Well, not only fees. I mean, it is fees in the sense that, the way it is at the moment for every B. Comm. student that we take on the so-called 'free fees system', the university pays the school, I don't know, five thousand or six thousand? It goes nowhere near covering the cost. If you bring in, if you bring in a foreign student, like a student from China will get directly into the faculty, a fee (I.9).

Thirdly, the decision to modularise was strongly linked with the new Senior Management Team. Interviewees associated modularisation with the drive for modernisation. The 'external influence' of the President's experience in Harvard was also seen to influence this internally generated demand for modernisation (I.11). His appointment was the first time the post was filled through an open international competition. While the President's experience was influential, it was not for the reasons perceived:

There is a fundamental difference in coming in and giving a course or being on Faculty, and really being part of it and seeing how it works. There are an awful lot of people who are exposed to the North American system but never really worked in it. The fact that it [UCD's modular system] looks like the North American system, is to a certain extent coincidental. Now, in other words, the underlying philosophy and strategic decision was not that we need a system like the American system. The strategic decision was that our curriculum is monolithic, inflexible, doesn't change and doesn't have any capacity to innovate (I.2).

Dr Brady outlined the USA and European systems and the opportunity for students to study outside of their discipline as key influences on UCD's

policy framework:

We have an opportunity to take the best of the American and European models and create something unique in Ireland (Brady, cited by Murphy, 2006).

This was expanded upon by the Registrar, who addressed what he and the President perceived as the ‘best of the American and European models’:

I think he [the President] has a point that the place where the Newman values of liberal education remain best expressed is in USA, or Canadian, undergraduate education. The European system, the Bologna 3-cycle system, has extraordinary appeal in terms of trying to think, ‘what we are trying to offer these students at different levels?’ (I.2).

Finally, the strategic pursuit of a modular agenda was associated with policy ideals, e.g. social inclusion, increased student recruitment and reform of the curriculum, in UCD’s Strategic Plan. These ideals were not expressed by interviewees.

5.2.2 2004/5 Policy Landscape

A number of interviewees referred to national signals for sectoral reform around 2000 (see Chapter 2.4). A small number referred to the increasing need for inter-institution collaboration, given Ireland’s size and ability to compete in the higher education ‘market’ and university rankings. Despite these, there were no sectoral ‘shocks’:

Irish higher education had been just ticking along hunky dory. There didn’t seem to be any impetus or real impetus for change. Students just kept pouring in, particularly into UCD. There were no major external shocks to the system. People thought at that stage that Bologna was all about Bachelors and Masters, which it was in some of the countries at that stage (I.16).

Staff outlined that they had not experienced any major reform and there was little direct pressure on UCD to reform pre-2005:

UCD had developed into a multi-speed, fragmented institution. That would be my assessment of it and not everyone had kept up with anywhere near the times. Some had and some were trying and some might not have been trying very hard. There was little pressure on them, as the perceived national leader in most areas, at least at undergraduate level and they were the first choice for many students across the country, so there was little impetus or external impetus for change. The government was happy at that stage, as long as they saw that the universities, at that stage, didn't cause problems. They didn't seem to want to push them in any particular way (I.16).

5.2.2.1 UCD Policy Landscape

'Multi-speed, fragmented' is an apt description of UCD. Its policy landscape and 'fragmented' structures pre-2005 are now discussed. In the absence of national and internal pressures, UCD was perceived to be in a state of inertia. As a result, 'it was timely to introduce a modular system and a student centered approach to learning to encourage individuals (faculty) to become involved in course design and development' (I.1). Prior to 2005, locally driven curricular innovations occurred across the various faculties in an ad hoc fashion. Programmes had unique structures and operated their own 'Marks and Standards' regulations. This prevented UCD from attaining its potential:

I suppose they [the SMT] were seeing other universities, particularly already ahead of the game and already with a credit structure in place so I think that was one big issue. I suppose there was also recognition that UCD as we were trying to become more competitive across the university, we were all doing different things, different frameworks and different approaches on different programmes. I think that was leading to all kinds of internal problems and never mind trying to look at the bigger picture, internationally (I.7).

Pre-2005, some Faculties⁵ introduced their own version of modularisation or semesterisation. There were ‘pockets of modularisation’ but not ‘a unified modular curriculum’ (I.8), e.g. the Faculty of Agriculture modularised its curriculum in 2004 and the Faculty of Commerce (later called the School of Business) had a ‘credit framework’ since before 2000. Some UCD interviewees were aware of Bologna reforms before modularisation was introduced. It influenced their design and re-design of programmes, in anticipation of future potential reforms, despite the lack of UCD policy regulations:

We were what I would call ‘a little bit modularised’ before modularisation actually came into play here. I also engaged with consultation with the staff. I kept the staff informed as to what was happening. We kind of began to think in terms of student workloads and ECTS weightings before they were incorporated into postgraduate level thinking. We also engaged in a consultative process not only with our own students and graduates and all that as we were asked to do..... When UCD eventually did modularise, I think we were quite ready for it (I.22).

In the Faculty of Commerce, the situation was different from other faculties, due its existing credit framework. On full-time programmes, the credits were derived from the US system and introduced as part of the accreditation process for the US based ‘Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business’. The US system was described as ‘the best system in town’ (I.1). According to the Vice-Principal for Teaching and Learning at UCD College of Business and Law (CBL):

The CREDIT system which existed in 2002 and ECTS System introduced in 2005. The CREDIT system used in 2002 was based on

⁵ ‘Faculties’ existed in UCD until 2005. In 2005, the university was restructured and the number of faculties reduced. See Chapter 2.5. The Faculty of Commerce became the School of Business in 2005.

student contact hours (3 or 6 credits per course) only, whereas the ECTS system is based on student workload – contact hours, independent study, autonomous learning activities, etc... (I.1)

This distinction was highlighted as vital as it explains how schools within UCD had to make more programme amendments with the introduction of modularisation compared to the Business School. The use of a credit framework commenced in the 1990's but courses were not described as 'discrete modules' until 2005. Modularisation required that programmes be organised in a series of modules which are seen as a self contained block, unit of study of standard size or value. While the Faculty of Commerce had structured its programmes into courses with a credit weighting, it was not modularised. Courses and programmes were compiled of 'credits' but there was little consistency in module credit size across or within programmes. Having had a credit framework already in operation, the Faculty of Commerce expected that once 'they had put numbers on the credits for the different 'courses', the Bologna objectives had been attained (Unattributed). The Faculty of Commerce semesterised in the 1990's due to international demand:

Semester arrangements were introduced by the Dean (at the time) and approved by Faculty Meeting. The President of the University chaired all Faculty Meetings and he would be aware of plans and developments within each one. As detailed, before it was designed to accommodate international exchange and allowed develop, agreements with international institutions, especially in the US (I.1).

5.2.3 The need for programme/module standardisation

Pre-2005, the university's diversity was manifested in its assorted programme structures and regulations. Each of the then 11 'faculties' managed their programmes' duration, regulations and structure differently.

The examples included here generally refer to the School of Business. The UCD Marks and Standards 2002/3 demonstrated how different programmes operated under locally initiated regulations (Faculty of Commerce, 2002). Different regulations, to compensate or to repeat, were available to students depending on their programme. In the academic year 2002/3, the Bachelor of Commerce (full-time) programme had 60 credits assigned for each year of this degree. In Year 1, students had eleven courses to complete, weighted between 2.4 and 6.6 credits depending on student contact hours (Faculty of Commerce, 2002: 4). On the Bachelor of Business Studies part-time programme, the 60 ECTS per level did not reflect workload or contact hours. There were eight modules to be completed in both Years 1 and 2 and five in Years 3 and 4. This compared to Year One on the Bachelor of Engineering, which required nine courses weighted between 100 and 300 marks (Faculty of Engineering, 2002:113). On the Bachelor of Science, Year One required completion of three subjects of 1,000 marks each (Faculty of Science, 2002). Each subject comprised of four units. UCD's disparate structures demonstrate the fragmented nature of policy pre-2005.

5.3 The Modularisation Process

The discussion has outlined the origins of modularisation pre-2005 to help explain UCD's policy process. At the time of modularisation, UCD's policy process became more centrally coordinated. While modularisation was a programmatic initiative, it occurred with wider university reform. (See Chapter 2.5). Modularisation occurred during university re-structuring and according to interviewees; it was often associated with it:

How do I answer a question when to me modularising is not a unique thing? It is not something that means anything, in particular. I could

say, if I am thinking of modularisation as 'X, Y or Z', this would be my answer. It is not to me, it is not a discrete entity. It is not a term which is unique. That is where I have a difficulty, because as I say, what are we talking about (Unattributed).

Modularisation is used to exemplify how the global policy process and its agenda influenced UCD. The section will first review the major forces influencing UCD's modularisation policy. Second, the transition from locally to centrally formulated policy is outlined. Third, the alteration of local and institutional programme governance is summarised before its impact on the School of Business outlined.

5.3.1 Major External Influences

Interviewees involved at a senior level in preparing UCD's modular policy identified a number of external influences. First the Bologna Process appeared to be the strongest influence on those formulating the modular framework according to research participants:

But certainly, in terms of modularising, there would have been no point in having a system which wasn't in some way readable in Europe. And which had credit, which was consistent with ECTS and a student workload which was credible as well too (I.8).

The most powerful thing that Bologna has done for us is that we obviously looked at aligning credit structures and using the principles of credit accumulation and transfer and mobility and all of those from Bologna (I.2).

If you do think about it, in true Bologna terms and about the three cycles, it completely changes your views about how undergraduate education, particularly in the sciences, should be organized. Bologna has hit in two ways. The first is in the credit accumulation, transfer, quality, mobility parts of Bologna, which informed the UCD Horizons/structured doctorate. And the second thing is, what does

Bologna really mean? You will know that everybody got quite obsessed with this '3+2' structure... Learning outcomes is one of the things that I should have listed (I.2).

The source of the influences from Bologna cited by the Registrar included the Bologna Handbook, the IUA, the NQAI and the Bologna Promoters. The Registrar highlighted the role of informal channels. (See Section 5.7). Modularisation was associated with the introduction of ECTS, learning outcomes and module descriptors, e.g. the 'Academic Regulations', governing UCD's modular programmes, state the university's objectives to provide greater flexibility and student choice and to 'enable full participation' in the EHEA 'in alignment with the Bologna process' (UCD: 2006,ii). The former Director of Academic Affairs acknowledged modular reform was about recognising credit volume, 'pretty much in line with the expectations about Bologna' (I.8). Because of this modular framework, UCD was now 'consistent with the Bologna Process' (I.8).

Second, the UK and USA experience influenced UCD's modular framework. The UK experience particularly featured regarding learning outcome thresholds. (See Section 5.6.3). A former Vice-President acknowledged that the experience of some of the SMT studying in the USA influenced the modular system (as discussed above):

I think it [modularisation] was informed by basically ...I'll say the US... A good few of us had been educated in US and the notion that you could have breadth and depth in a degree programme was something that attracted us and certainly, I thought would have influenced us, about what should be on offer. I mean, at most American universities, without sacrificing depth in anyway, you can take a fairly broad range of courses and traditionally, you went to a faculty and the faculty provided the courses, in a very lockstep, rigid manner. We didn't think that was the best way to design an education

experience. So, I think Horizons, is....was a natural consequence of modularisation (I.11).

Third, three interviewees identified the National Framework of Qualifications and NQAI as an important, less explicit influence, e.g. the NQF was 'a standing item' on the IUA Registrar's Agenda every three months (I.16). Respondents could not provide explicit insight into how this influenced policy but rather it shaped the 'wider debate':

But it is, I think, it has had a huge influence on the thinking within UCD. Maybe not at the start in preparing Horizons but certainly in the deepening and broadening of the Horizons concept and everything to do with learning outcomes, competences and descriptors (I.16).

Finally, UCD staff perceived that national agencies were not generally influential. The 'HEA wasn't particularly inspiring for UCD in implementing those [modular] reforms' (I.16). The only reference to the HEA in the UCD Strategic Plan 2005-8 was the EUA Quality Review commissioned by the HEA and Irish Universities Quality Board. Commenting on UCD's modularisation, a HEA interviewee recognised that this initiative was supported generally by the HEA (I.13).

5.3.2 UCDs Locus of Policy Development

Having reviewed the major influences cited by those preparing UCD's modular policy, the locus of policy development is reviewed. Reviewing the institutional structure provides an insight into the policy process and the changes in governance concurrent with modularisation. In 2004, there were eleven (one per Faculty) approaches to programme management as faculty/programme policy was generally initiated by Faculties, in

consultation with the Registrar's Office. The Registrar, Director of Academic Affairs and representatives of the eleven Faculties became the 'Initiative on Modularisation and Semesterisation Committee' and reviewed how modularisation might occur, according to the former Director of Academic Affairs:

[It] thrashed out the details of all of the regulatory and kind of structural issues (I.8).

.... simply functioned to work out how this [modularisation] would be made to happen. So it was a tactical, operational group rather than a strategic group because the strategic decision had been made (I.8).

The process was 'messy and organic' (I.8). There was never 'a particular blueprint of how the governance would work' (I.8). Policy development 'happened iteratively' as consensus was built and modified in and out of formal committees (I.8). It was 'an adaptive or a sort-of flexible way of working' (I.8). As modularisation rolled out, this group became the University Modular Programme Committee and as modularisation was established, it became the University Undergraduate Programme Committee. A single set of 'Academic Regulations' were implemented university wide, replacing the 'Marks and Standards' for each programme. A derogation was required where a Programme sought to operate outside these regulations. This is contrasted with previous practice, where regulations were formulated by Faculty (see above):

UCD adopts[/ed] a centralized* approach to policy formulation (Academic Secretariat) and implementation. There are frequent checks and balances undertaken to establish what is happening at local level – normally through Deans/Heads of School, and Deans / Chairs of Programme Boards. With this homogenous approach, there are many instances where derogations are sought. The examples where derogations are sought and granted include such aspects as the size of

undergraduate modules (programmes can seek to have modules larger than 5 ECTS at undergraduate level), the 'must pass' specification, the application of compensation, the scheduling of examinations, the organization of examination boards, etc. (I.1).

I expect individuals at the Centre to argue differently and highlight the level of independence Programmes have if only they would take it. Sometimes it is true that Programmes can implement things locally but there is always a check up by way of centralized reports (I.1).

Pre-2005, the policy process was described as 'bottom-up': individuals aware of Bologna 'had a go' (I.5). Post-2005, interviewees acknowledged a top down approach to avail of the full strengths of modularisation. While modularisation was associated with a 'top-down' approach, a UCD Teaching Development Officer perceived more autonomy was awarded to individuals:

... there is an interesting thing about autonomy because in one way it was very top down, in other words, it is was very like 'you have to have five credit modules, you have to have so many core, you have to write the module descriptor form in this way'. So that was prescriptive, no doubt and I suppose it had to be to all, again, to be equal.... But there was huge flexibility. In fact, it was very encouraged to choose whatever teaching and learning methods and assessment you wanted, within that. And in fact, I think all of staff were quite liberated within that structure... (I.5).

5.3.3 Local and Institutional Programme Governance

The centralised policy development represented a change in the policy process. This section discusses how programmes were governed before Faculty restructuring and programme modularisation. Due to the 'concurrent implementation' of the new modular curriculum and academic structures, 'opportunities and challenges' were presented (UCD, 2005c:1). Simultaneously, the eleven faculties were restructured. (See Section 2.5).

While modularisation was considered a programmatic initiative, it demanded centralised governance to exploit its full advantages.

5.3.3.1 Faculty Governance pre-2005

Pre-2005, the UCD academic policy process was described as 'ad hoc':

In terms of the institutional capacity to think, you had a set of committees reporting ultimately into Academic Council, its Executive and then a range of committees for different purposes. You had the Faculties themselves and centrally all that was really available to all that was a Secretariat, so the function of the 'Office of the Registrar' was to help the deliberative processes of the university but not to inform them in anyway. Policy was made on an ad hoc basis, often arising out of either Faculty need or an external stimulus (I.2).

The Faculty decided upon programme structures at periodic Faculty meetings autonomously. Submissions were made, regarding new programmes, changes to programme regulations, etc., to a Faculty Standing Committee who prepared an agenda for a Faculty meeting. The programme structure and regulations were discussed and decided upon by the Faculty and submitted for final approval by ACEC. A Faculty Meeting engaged all faculty members:

In the old days, every full time member of staff had a right to be a member of Faculty and to go to Faculty [meetings] and raise anything they wanted...say anything they wanted. That is gone (I.9).

Generally, policy change occurred as a result of Faculty, rather than national or university issues. There were very few external stimuli. Where there was they were policy 'objectives', rather than 'policy imperatives', e.g. improving access for disadvantaged students. Usually, academic policy was stimulated in response to a perceived Faculty need:

The Faculty would consider what it might want to do and then the Dean of the Faculty would bring that into the central university governance and it would either be accepted by the university as a reasonable policy modified by the university or rejected. And it might be the case that Faculty would do something anyway, irrespective with either having it signed off as university policy or having failed to get a particular policy agreed at university level, might adopt it in some way and tone it down and have it delivered locally (I.2).

Both prior to and post restructuring, programme innovations remained informally approved by the Head of Subject Area, in the first instance. Heads were consulted first regarding curriculum, module size, etc. However, the President's involvement with the School/Faculty altered. Previously he attended Faculty meetings. When the new President was appointed, this practice stopped and signaled a change in the perceived role of the President to focus more on the university's external relations. This interviewee recognised that this change was 'appropriate' as he is the 'Chief Executive' (I.11). The SMT felt 'great frustration at the way faculty meetings were conducted'. According to a former Vice-President, these meetings 'didn't deal with substantive issues but were talking shops for, you know, academic politicians' (I.11). Dr Brady declined to be interviewed for this study.

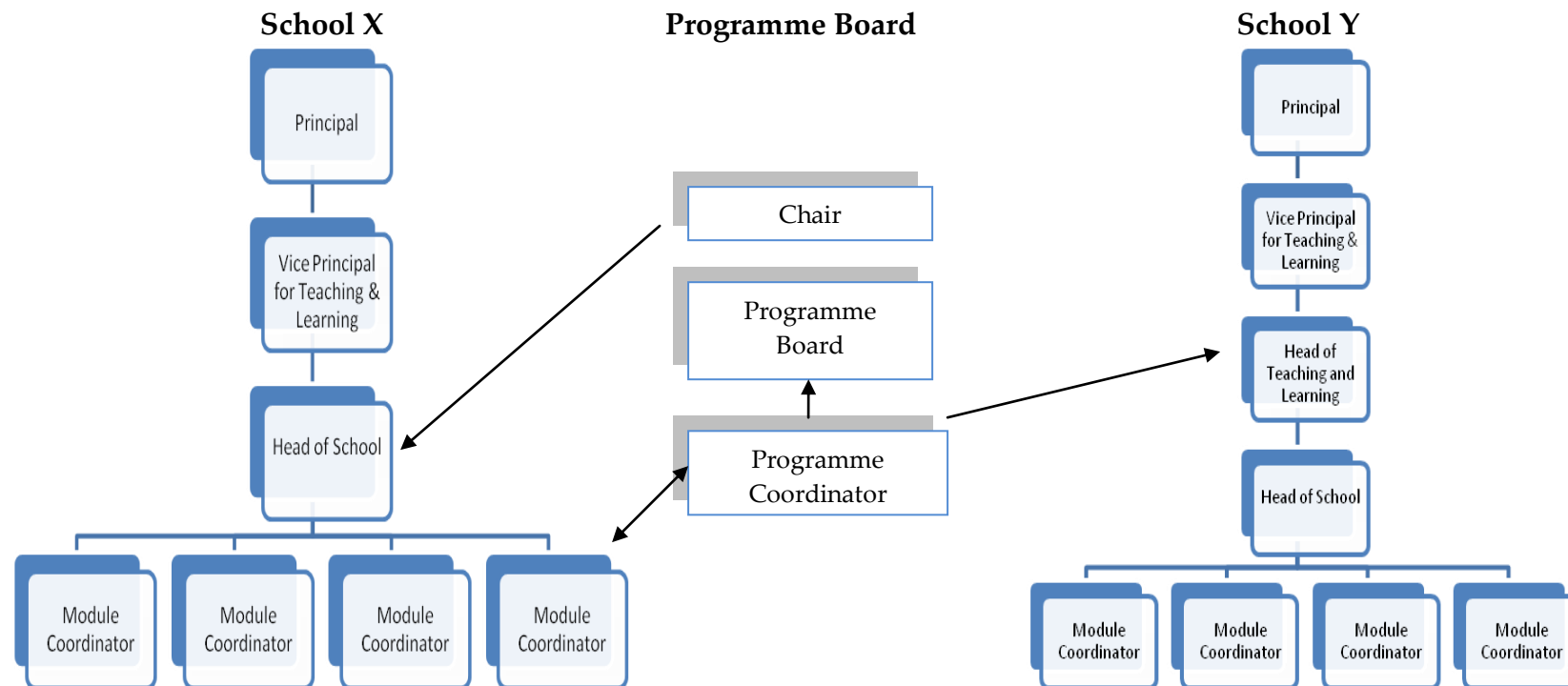
5.3.3.2. Programme Board & UUPB

'Faculty' meetings became School Meetings in 2005 and were scheduled as biannual meetings to update all staff on developments. The new Programme Board structure commenced in November 2005 and took responsibility for programme governance, as the 'key instrument of academic regulation compliance (I.11)'. The Programme Board structure was described as more streamlined, though 'the great majority of academics have no role at all' (I.9). Programme boards were described as being focused on 'routine issues':

That [the quality of programmes] is not being captured sufficiently by the Programme Boards, they are dealing with very routine and mundane matters and the imposition of regulation and the compliance of regulation (I.11).

Generally, there was a Programme Board in situ for each College, though in the case of the CBL, there was a separate Programme Board for both the School of Business and the School of Law. Within the School of Business, there was an undergraduate and postgraduate Programme Board. This was unique but perceived necessary by the School due to its size. Figure 5.1 maps the governance structure and policy process of this School's Programme Board, demonstrating the increased complexity of governance as modularisation commenced. Prior to modularisation, the process was less complex but also not as explicitly mapped out. These changes highlights that modularisation was not only about pedagogical developments but changes in academic governance.

Figure 5.1 Programme Board Reporting



(Adapted from UCD, 2005c: 6)

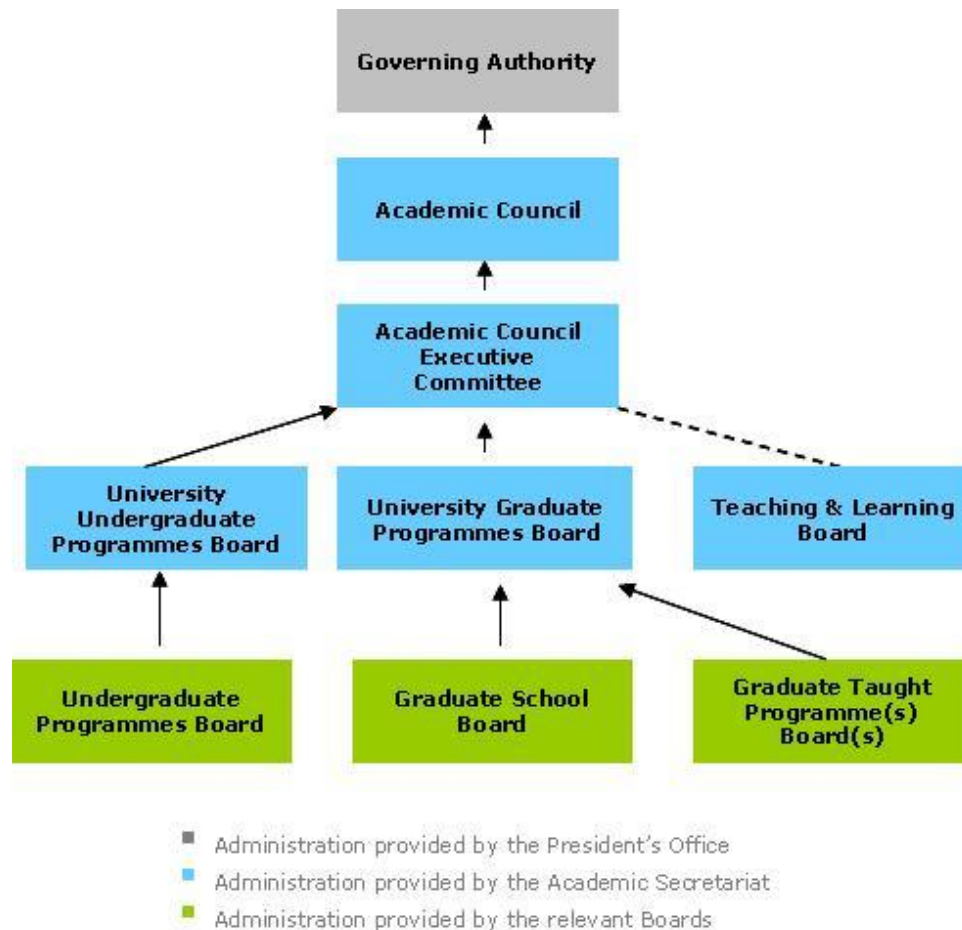
*The Module coordinator has academic responsibility for a module.

The Programme Board was constituted of the disciplinary representatives and Schools contributing to a programme. The Chair reported to the College Principal hosting the programme through their nominee, the Vice-Principal for Teaching and Learning. The Programme Board appointed a Programme Coordinator to liaise with the Heads of School providing modules to the programme (UCD, 2005c: 6). The Module Coordinator had responsibility for the module's design and delivery. The Head of School was accountable to the Head of the College, and ultimately to Academic Council, for the School's educational activities. The structure of the Undergraduate Board at the School of Business consisted of the Chair (Quinn School Director), Vice Principal for Teaching and Learning, Programme Coordinators, Heads of Subject Areas, CBL Nominee and Student Representatives. The non-voting members included the Programme Office Director, Associate Programme Office Directors and Student Adviser.

During the process of modularisation, Programme Board (PB) autonomy was devolved to the board to make low level decisions regarding programme design, delivery, assessment, quality assurance, admissions, student welfare and transfers. The Programme Examination Board (PEB) was responsible for grade award, progression and graduation. All Business School undergraduate programmes were approved by the PEB, by the University Undergraduate Programme Board (UUPB) and ACEC on behalf of Academic Council (UCD School of Business, 2005). The UUPB supported the ACEC's work by reviewing and making recommendations on the design, delivery, assessment and quality of the educational programmes within its remit, and developed proposals on policy and regulations governing programmes. It approved the proposed new programmes by the Schools and made recommendations to ACEC, e.g. the approval of programme structures, credit frameworks and content as proposed by Programme Boards. UUPB also reviewed reports of module development activity carried out by Schools and their module

catalogues. Figure 5.2 outlines the governance relationship between Programme Boards and other committee structures.

Figure 5.2. Academic Committee Structure after 2005



(UCD, 2009b)

Generally, School of Business staff believed there was ‘much more of a sense of a centralised hand on anything that you want to do’ post-modularisation (Unattributed), as exemplified by the introduction of module descriptors which outlined the content, learning outcomes and assessment of a module of study. For each module, a module descriptor had now to be submitted to the Registrar’s Office by the responsible module coordinator. The completion and submission of module descriptors were monitored by the ‘Centre’ and were intended to be approved by the Vice Principal for Teaching and Learning.

School staff also believed that post-modularisation academic structures were less democratic. While more autonomy and executive power was awarded to the Head of School, the School became centrally driven:

Well, I think, the thing I would be very conscious of, and I am not sure if it has come out in what we have discussed, but I believe that the academic staff have been taken out of the equation and have allowed themselves to be taken out of the equation in many ways because they... they have no forum really for familiarising themselves with all of the structures. It is very time-consuming so they don't want to get involved (Unattributed).

The Dean highlighted changes between the School, College and university under Statue 6 (Universities Act 1997). When the School of Business amalgamated into the College of Business and Law, the formal power of the School Executive was lost. Consequently, issues 'bypassed' the School due to new governance arrangements:

In larger schools you say, well of course, it will bypass the School because, the School participates in an Undergraduate Programme Board, where it has representation but it has a lot of other folk represented as well. From our point of view, it totally violates unity of command, kind of... I had a real problem with that. We established a practice that is not written down anywhere that says that before anything goes to either Programme Board or is significant in nature by way of proposals, it needs to come to the School Executive. We established a School Executive (I.10).

Thus, the College 'was hollowed out' (I.10): the scale of governance reform presented by modularisation and restructuring demanded an informal local response to re-establish governance control through an informal School Executive Committee, with 'overall responsibility for School governance' (UCD School of Business, 2005: 6).

5.3.3.3. Policy Development: Professional, Centralised Development

Programmes could seek derogations where a Programme Board believed the University Regulations should not be applied, e.g. on the Bachelor of Business

Studies (part-time) programme, two derogations were sought: first modules to be accredited with 10 ECTS at degree level to take account of students' experiential learning; second, for examinations to take place outside of the usual examination timetable to provide part-time students with a longer semester. The School perceived a lack of understanding from the Centre regarding how modularisation impacted upon programmes, particularly part-time programmes.

UCD's Central Administration, and particularly the Registrar, were recognised as driving the policy. The modular policy and its related policies were perceived as being established by a small number of individuals at the 'Centre', responsible for pushing the policy throughout the university:

...the policy was set-up by individuals distance, distinct from us [School of Business] for university wide [use]. It was at the implementation which we became involved and whether there was resistance, all they wanted to do was to get it through. So, they got it through. They set-up boards to get it through [UMPC]. I don't think there was involvement by anybody at a distance. There were a select few that were chosen to just push and that is the way you get change.'... (I.1).

So, you had an administrative system calling the shots and the academic structures seemed to be second priority... (I.9).

No matter how hard we try to get academics involved in policy making, the Registrar will have people from that unit, from Secretariat, and he will tell us that they are doing policy on Extenuating Circumstances, on Late Submissions. They start everything and we are lucky, if us academics can input, at the end. It just seems a very strange way for policy formulation but that is it (I.1).

Pre-2005, UCD's policy function had no name and resided within the 'Office of the Registrar'. It assisted with the deliberative processes of the university but did not inform them. The Registrar highlighted that because of modularisation and its relationship with university strategy, a new 'Academic Policy and Programme

Development Unit' was established to support curricular reform and teaching and learning policy. It reported to the Registrar and was charged with developing centralised academic policy across the university, including the General Regulations, the Policy on Extenuating Circumstances, the Policy on Late submissions, etc. Prior to modularisation, these issues were dealt with locally. The development of this unit required professional policy staff:

The rationale for professionalizing the support of policy development in the university was to enable some strategic initiatives, such as, we want to modularise (I.2).

A Vice-Principal for Teaching and Learning was appointed in each College to provide guidance to staff and to coordinate teaching and learning initiatives locally. They also sat on the 'University Teaching and Learning Committee'. The Vice Principal for Teaching and Learning at the CBL attended IUA and IUQB (Irish Universities Quality Board) workshops regarding Bologna initiatives. The School of Business's engagement in central university policy was also represented by the establishment of a School and College Teaching and Learning Committee which relayed central and school policy developments and innovations to representative members of the academic subject areas.

Interviewees working in the 'Centre' suggested that modularisation introduced greater opportunities for innovation but this was contested locally. (See Section 5.3.2). Staff suggested that programmes could implement things locally, but ultimately 'there is always a check up by way of centralized reports' (Unattributed interviewee):

It [the School of Business] has certain autonomy but not a lot. It is told that it has autonomy but then you really need to comply then..... There is a university plagiarism policy. The School is entitled to use that or to develop their own. So, there it is but then, you are risking the School because if what you develop doesn't work... (I.1).

With the transfer of policy development from School to Centre, a progression in central policy expertise accumulated. The former Director of Academic Affairs acknowledged that as universities respond to external influences that internally some of the ways that they change is 'that a number of roles grow in these new spaces...' (I.8). These 'third space' professional roles were both administrative and academic. As modular reform continued, a growing number of policy professionals, including Policy Officers, were appointed.

5.3.3.4 Role of the Registrar

The Registrar was highlighted as a dynamic influence on UCD's internal behaviour during modularisation and semesterisation. While the decision to implement a modular curriculum emanated from the SMT, it was driven by the new Registrar:

.... you could have done it and ticked the box, do you know what I mean but to really do it to the extent that UCD has done it, took someone like Philip Nolan [Registrar]. I think a different type of personality would have....wouldn't have.... I mean he fought those battles. He fought back (I.5).

The Registrar influenced many of the key committees formulating the new modular framework, e.g. the Initiative on Modularisation and Semesterisation Committee and the University Modular Programme Committee (later labelled the respective Undergraduate and Postgraduate University Programme Committees). A former member of the SMT perceived that much of the policy on the new modular framework was written by the Registrar. Many of the discussion documents were written under the Registrar's name including 'Modularisation and academic restructuring: governance and management of programmes and modules' (26th July, 2005), 'A standardised timetabling framework for the UCD modularised curriculum (12th May, 2005)' and 'Grading, Compensation, Progression, Repeats, Deferral, and Honours Classification in the Modular Curriculum (11th November 2004)'.

5.3.3.5 Impact of modularisation: the School of Business

Having reviewed the policy process and the changes in governance structure arising from the 'Initiative on Modularisation and Semesterisation', the impact upon the School of Business is discussed. While most respondents agreed that the period was 'stressful' and 'hectic', modularisation was acknowledged as UCD's most pervasive teaching initiative:

... it stretched into everyone in the university who teaches. So in some ways it was the most widespread teaching innovation ever, in a way (I.5).

At School, the scale of modularisation was described as 'huge' and its impact on the School of Business was manifest in six respects.

(a) Changes in Governance

First, the new modular curriculum and the resultant changes in governance impacted upon the authority structures between the School and 'Centre' (see above).

(b) Policy Process Complexity

The second impact of modularisation was the increasingly complex policy process. One example of this was the requirement for a derogation, where a programme or School sought to be exempt from an aspect of the central 'Academic Regulations'. Where programmes sought a derogation, a submission was put to the Programme Board. Upon approval at School level, a request was brought to the UMPC and then approved by ACEC. For the Bachelor of Business Studies programme (part-time), this process was long and complex:

I think over the last two to three years that any of those derogations, we had looked for those from day one of modularisation. But at the beginning we were told you would have to come back year on year and eventually, over the last kind of six months or since last Christmas, we felt that we couldn't

continue to put the energy into looking for derogations. It was taking us away from other important business so we had a meeting. We had a meeting re the exams issue with the director of assessment and logistics, X [Director of Assessment, UCD], a few months ago and we put it to her that we needed to bed this down. The need for this derogation was going to change in the foreseeable future. She advised to go back to the Programme Board, get it approved there, put it back to Academic Policy [Unit] and Academic Council and get them to approve it. And luckily, that is what has been done (I.7).

Working towards this derogation engaged some staff with the central policy process and they began to lobby. The complexity of the policy process required that School staff become more engaged with programme policy and Central Administration. This increasingly complex system also created uncertainty:

One of the impacts of modularisation in UCD is that it was a very sharp, shock to the system because; it wasn't only modularisation and new regulations. For many people, it was semesterisation, for many people, it was also, I guess...obviously the new 'Horizons' for the undergraduates, which you know, affected everyone. And it all happened, at the same time. So, one of the effects it had was to create a kind of a monumental beast, almost within the university for people who felt that they were being hijacked. That everything they knew, in terms of how things worked, just was thrown out the window (Unattributed).

(c) Greater 'Bureaucracy'

Thirdly, respondents at the School believed modularisation brought a lot of increased administration. In addition to the new regulations, evidence of greater surveillance and inspection of programmes became prevalent, requiring extra administration, e.g. the requirement for module descriptors. This also engaged all academic staff with the policy process.

(d) Impact on Teaching and Learning

Finally, modularisation impacted on School teaching and learning initiatives. Interviewees highlighted that a key facet of programme modularisation was the perceived flexibility it heralded for students regarding curriculum choice and pace

of study. While standardisation was needed for the modular system to work effectively, this reduced flexibility previously held by lecturers and School. Particularly, there was a sentiment that the new capping of resit results introduced was disadvantageous:

...it has always been heralded that the modular system is always put forward as something that creates the ultimate in flexibility. But that is not flexible, that is the most rigid thing that you can get (I.9).

As per Section 5.1, under the new regulations, undergraduate programmes had to be generally composed of 5 ECTS. Undergraduate programmes were structured into 3 stages and each module was generally weighted with 5 ECTS. Thus, some programmes increased or decreased the modules on offer:

Firstly, I suppose it was about coming up with some type of conformity in terms of all of our programmes and ensuring that the credit system was consistent across the board. It did change the number of modules on each programme. We had to increase [them] across every single programme. We had to increase the number of modules on the programme, and that had an impact in terms of student workload. There is question about it. It has had an impact on the delivery of programme and the cost of delivering programmes..... I suppose, on the upside, I mean, I don't know if you want me to go into the introduction of the study skills modules but modularisation has allowed us to be creative and innovative. And introduce modules that we wouldn't have been able to before (I.7).

While the modular reforms were introduced to provide students with 'flexibility', many School respondents perceived that programmes were required to 'conform' to the modular framework. As modularisation was implemented there was 'some flexibility at the end' but generally the 'Centre' was perceived not to make many compromises. Many interviewees recognised that conformity was required for modularisation to work but maintained that modularisation was approached on a 'one size fits all' basis (Unattributed):

... it is more tightly controlled and initially, most certainly, there was a very palpable reluctance to allow any variance on the theme. But, you know, gradually I think there is a realisation that one size does not fit all and although that phrase was used at the beginning, people were given to understand that it would not be 'one size fits all' (Unattributed).

As discussed in Section 5.3.3, a number of respondents at School level perceived that there was little interaction on the new complex regulations with those working on programmes:

As we could see the policies that were beginning to come on line and what they were really thinking, we did put together a policy and discussion document for the Registrar highlighting how modularisation would impact upon programmes and looking at the positives and the negatives. I mean, we put that document to the Registrar but never got a response on it. I feel we did as much as we could at the time on our side. From the university's side, I think they should have consulted more with programmes and schools to see 'here is what we are thinking' ... 'here is what modularisation might look like' Now give us a document programme by programme or school by school highlighting the implications as you see them for you' and give suggestions of how the regulations could support the programmes if you like. While there would have been some consultation up and down, I am not sure if it really was consultation or if it was just giving out the documents and draft policy for initial discussion. I am not so sure that any feedback really went back or influenced policy (I.7).

Overall, governance structures between the School and university were recalibrated by the 'Centre' due to new governance arrangements arising from modularisation and restructuring. Generally, these changes resulted in a perceived reduction of School autonomy. Particularly, the School's identity affected the response to these arrangements.

5.3.3.6 The School of Business: An identity within UCD

The School of Business appeared to have a strong sense of itself. According to the Director of Internationalisation:

UCD Business School is... everyone agrees, without question, the number one school in Ireland and will be for a long, long time. Ok. But that is not a satisfactory positioning as such. I think what UCD Business School is an international school, which happens to be located in Ireland. That is the proper positioning (I.9).

There was a sense that the School of Business was less typical than other Schools. The School of Business was an initial reference point to Central Administration due to its credit framework and advanced internationalisation, prior to modularisation. A number of senior staff members of the School of Business perceived that this initially informed the university modular reform. The Vice Principal of Teaching and Learning at CBL perceived UCD 'replicated' a lot of what they learnt from the Business School. The Dean of the School reported 'it would not be an exaggeration to say that in most things at UCD, the Business School is ahead of the rest of the university, or most of the university'. He added that the School's stage of internationalisation was not particularly far advanced but in comparison to the university, it was 'light years ahead'.

5.4 Higher Education in Ireland: The national policy field

Many of UCD reforms since 2005 were internally motivated in response to external global and European pressures. The national/international policy goals and processes will now be reviewed. The discussion looks to policy development nationally and internationally to review the processes by which the policy of modularisation was conceived. This investigates how these European and global processes influenced this institution.

Post-2004, institutional policy goals were directly related to and rationalised using external agencies, e.g. the EU, OECD and EUA. Regarding the Bologna Declaration, the Professor of Education highlighted that while Bologna might not have been 'overtly part' of the Strategic Plan, the UCD Horizons programme was 'very, very

closely aligned with the way in which the Tuning Project has recommended' (I.22). The ensuing discussion reviews how national and international stakeholders influenced UCD policy explicitly and implicitly. This section discusses these complex relationships, starting with the state (i.e. the DES and HEA) and Irish universities.

5.4.1 Irish Universities and the Higher Education Authority

The universities were agreed by all to be autonomous from the Irish state. Under the Universities Act 1997, they retain autonomy for management of their own affairs. The HEA is a statutory body under this Act and the Higher Education Authority Act 1971. The HEA Act (S3, a-e) awards general functions for higher education development and 'assisting in the co-ordination of State investment in higher education':

The HEA is a statutory body that is a planning and development body for higher education in Ireland. It has a wide advisory role in the development of policy to the Minister of Education. we provide policy advice to the Minister across a whole range, the full range of areas in higher education. Sometimes though the topics would be initiated by the HEA and at other times, directly by the Minister (I.13).

5.4.1.1 Hollowing out?

In recent years, the HEA's structure facilitated a hollowing out of policy functions to different networks, particularly the IHEQN (Irish Higher Education Quality Network) and the IUA. The HEA was involved in policy development, assessing 'which way the wind is blowing' with the disparate bodies and instigating the conversations with 'informal' agencies, e.g. IHEQN (I.23). The IHEQN was an informal body established in 2003, after a National Conference in 2003, by the stakeholders in Irish higher education. UCD was not a member but was represented by the IUA:

You pretty much have all the players on that (IHEQN). Look at that. They are a body with no strategic power. They are just an informal group of people coming together for a chat. That meets regularly. It meets about once a month. And all the players are involved there. So I would look at them in relation to, those people. Not the role of the IHEQN. The Irish Higher Education Quality Network is the people involved with the people at the coalface. Their organisations are pushing it [the Bologna Process] (I.23).

It was suggested that the HEA used such agencies to informally engage with the higher education stakeholders. A former member of the IHEQN outlined that the HEA did not force a particular policy trajectory but used the IHEQN as a forum to suggest ideas (I.23).

The CEO of the IUA deduced that the HEA's complex position was due to a process of self-redefinition. He assessed it as 'unusual animal' of 'half a Department and half an agency' which was beginning to make the transition 'from being a funding agency', to a policy actor (I.15). However, the former UCD Director of Academic Affairs suggested that the HEA's role in brokering the space between the universities and the DES presented a more fundamental issue. The HEA's role was perceived to be a 'contradictory statement', as it also determines sectoral funding.

5.4.1.2. Policy Capacity at the HEA

UCD saw 'itself as autonomous and responsible for how it' provides education, while also being mindful that it is a 'publicly funded institution' (I.8). To senior members of the School of Business, the HEA's role was related to funding, not educational policy. The HEA was perceived by a senior UCD staff member to have a 'central planning culture' within the civil service and did not have the capacity to develop higher education policy (I.11):

It is the funding agency and yet it is trying to develop a strategic plan for the sector as a whole. I think the very notion that a bunch of civil servants would develop a strategic plan for the sector went out when communism collapsed. But, you know, it obviously hasn't...So, you know we have a much more fundamental issue and that is should we let the market operate and I think let the market operate for the universities (I.11).

In describing the HEA's lack of policy capacity, the Registrar suggested it was somewhat due to its role in higher education as a 'buffer body' between the state and higher education institutions. Due to the HEA's close relationship to the state and universities' autonomy, it was difficult for the HEA to play a substantial role between 'a set of institutions and the government with fairly conflicting priorities'. The ambiguity of the HEA's position created a 'vacuum' for the universities and thus a role for the IUA (I.2). The IUA at times was deemed to take views 'more appropriate from the HEA' and instigated a brokering between the universities. This created difficulties as the IUA's role was obscured;

The problem is that there are two bodies in the zone between the universities and the state and neither of them know what their role is because if the HEA was brokering the relationships and the role of the HEA was to deal with autonomous and somewhat competing universities...competition is a good thing but try and get a national outcome for it, well then all the IUA would be doing is acting as a lobby group. They would be like IBEC* (I.2).

*IBEC is the Irish Business and Employers Confederation.

It must be difficult for them [the IUA] because what the universities do is then say 'well now, we can't have you regulating us. You are supposed to be on our side'. There is a huge lack of clarity of role here between the bodies that should be regulating us and brokering us is not. Then the body, who should be lobbying for us and should be on our side of the table if we are trying to achieve appropriate balances of power, sees the vacuum and in a perfectly understandable way tries to feel it. It says 'come on guys, we have a labour market problem, let's fix it. They are supposed to ask us to fix it and you are supposed to ask us to make sure there is an appropriate balance between what they do and what we do' (I.2).

The IUA suggested HEA support of universities, particularly in terms of teaching and learning, was minimal due to institutional autonomy. However, the Registrar suggested a high degree of support formally through the IUA and informally outside of the network structure;

That is interesting and I can understand them saying that. I think it reflects on an interesting problem for the IUA but there is an awful lot that goes on because of the existence of the IUA network, that isn't brokered by the IUA.

In other words, the Registrars exchange a lot of information and often come to common positions because they have informally asked each other. Even though it doesn't get enshrined in an IUA policy document, we are very much aware of where we are all trying to get to and are all very collaborative, in terms of our willingness to share (I.2).

The IUA was also said to increasingly provide a support for the universities regarding the Bologna Process, particularly due to the expertise of one member of staff who formerly worked at the EUA. Previously, informal progress on the Bologna Process was monitored by the DES but this role had increasingly been adopted by the IUA:

The IUA are brokering and that is partly because that is what the IUA should do and partly because X [IUA Director of Academic Affairs] is so literate and connected in this field (I.2).

The above quotes provide an insight into the policy relationship between this university and those institutions which embody the state, i.e. the HEA and the DES. These agencies are not just other institutional players in the Irish policy context; they represent the state policy field and in the case of the DES, the Irish Minister and government. Those working outside of the state machinery perceived that those working in the DES were less ambitious civil servants supporting a less prestigious government department. While the HEA is legislatively an autonomous body, essentially it is the client of the Department of Education and Science. A close relationship was perceived to exist between the HEA and the DES in terms of staffing:

It is partly to do with the way they recruit into the Irish civil service or broader public service. You are recruited in at a tender age with very few specialist qualifications and then they recruit very few people after that. Good people tend to sift into good departments, like Department of the Taoiseach, Department of Foreign Affairs. And other people slowly sift out and eventually end up in education and the HEA. They are so conservative about...the opportunities have been gapping wide for them and good suggestions have been made in recent years and they are so conservative about doing it (Unattributed).

In some cases, you do have people in education [i.e. the DES] for fifteen years but they are there for all the wrong reasons. They are there because the more progressive government departments or the higher profile ones push them out. Education, and health and social welfare are dumping grounds for the low performers with no ambition. There is no one in there with any.... There are people in there with accumulated experience because they have been there for a while but none of them, as far as I am concerned, have any expertise, proper expertise, in the areas they are working in (Unattributed).

Equally, UCD perceived a lack of vision from the HEA. UCD's SMT perceived that at times, they could highlight deficiencies of the HEA. This was evident with the inclusion of the British Academy report 'That full complement of Riches' as part of the 'Public Policy Context of the UCD Strategic Plan 2005-8' and highlighted the role for the humanities in universities. This UK report was selected as UCD felt it should inform the HEA's agenda, in the implied absence of guidance:

... part of our rhetorical device was to identify it, as something that the HEA or other people should attend to (I.11)

5.4.2. Policy Autonomy and Incentivisation

When asking interviewees how governmental policy goals were articulated to the universities by the DES and the HEA, it was perceived to occur in a loose fashion. The former Adviser to the Minister for Education and Science indicated that the Minister and the Government set the objectives and the HEA operationalises them:

... the Minister establishes the broad objectives and the government establishes the broad objectives. So, to answer the question, there is a set of expectations from the higher education system which would be established by government. That is where the role of the Department would come in, in terms of input into those and establishing those. The HEA's role is in advising on the more specific policy measures that are required to translate those into some form of reality. But like I said at the outset, there is quite a close relationship between the Department and the HEA in terms of the day-to-day analysis that goes on around the whole area and the direction that they are taking. So, for example, they have put a lot of effort into reforming funding models which is around reorienting the system or incentivising behaviour in the system (I.12).

This 'reorienting of the system or incentivising behaviour' is important and discussed in Section 5.4.3. In exploring the HEA's role, interviewees highlighted the subtle differences between the HEA and the DES and a mutual dependency between them. Ultimate responsibility for policy goals resides with the Minister and DES. While the HEA can 'develop policy and provide advice' and has a statutory right and function to take an 'independent view', only policy with ministerial support gets implemented (I.12). Due to the close relationship between them, it was perceived that their policy process was not transparent:

I am sure they [HEA] do advise the ministry informally but we do not know what advice and if that advice is listened to. We don't actually see the advice, whether it is made by phone calls or emails or whatever, as opposed to publishing strong documents or good documents with strong recommendations (I.16).

When asked how aspects of policy are selected to be managed by the HEA, it was indicated that this 'just evolved more than anything' (I.13) based upon informal contact and daily interaction. There did not appear to be a specific higher education policy expertise dedicated at the DES. The allocation of specific policy areas did not appear to be strategically devolved to the HEA:

....the higher education part of the Department of Education is minimal and they rely solely on the HEA, except the HEA doesn't do anything without prior sign off from this small number of people in the higher education section in the Department. So, it is a bit of the tail wagging the dog or whatever... (I.16).

An IUA interviewee highlighted that there was generally 'a lack of policy capacity in the Department of Education and Science', as per the Cromiém Report (2000) (I.15) and the DES was 'completely bogged down in administration and therefore can't create policy....' (I.15). It was perceived that the higher education sector receives least attention from the DES, as it does not 'control' the universities due to their legislative autonomy and self regulation of their academic affairs. As a result,

‘it is the area where there is the least, if any, top down direction from the state’ (I.15):

They [the DES] aren’t interested in higher education. Irish higher education isn’t important politically. It doesn’t win or lose votes, whereas national schools do. And higher education in Ireland is a very well behaved bunch. The students don’t run riot and the professors don’t go on strike. Universities generally are well run. There are no major scandals and they don’t go pear-shaped. They are happy to ignore them. That was the crux of UCD’s status in the 1990’s; there wasn’t a problem, so there was nothing to do (Unattributed).

The HEA and DES interacted with the universities regarding the Bologna Process ‘in a very, very loose way’ (I.15). (This is consistent with general Irish higher education policy making, as outlined in Chapter 2). While the HEA was acknowledged as the national coordinating agency for the Bologna Process, UCD felt political pressure to make progress on the Bologna Process from the DES. The Registrar received occasional phone calls from the DES regarding UCD’s implementation of the Bologna objectives. This was corroborated by a HEA interviewee who suggested that a request for Bologna compliance from the universities was only formalised in the grant letter saying ‘this also includes your cooperation with the Bologna Process’ (I.13). Other than this, the HEA indirectly liaised with UCD regarding Bologna through seminars, the IUA and other informal mechanisms. In recent years the progress regarding Bologna increasingly was informally supported by the IUA, through seminars and policy advice.

Despite this relationship between the HEA and the DES, the HEA was ‘the coordinating body in Ireland’ for the Bologna Process. The HEA loosely liaised with institutions, through the Bologna Promoters and seminars. (See Section 5.5.4.). When asked if there was any tension implementing the Bologna objectives, a HEA official acknowledged the ‘slowness’ of implementation was a concern for the DES. The loose way in which policy permeates from a national level to institutional level

was demonstrated by UCD's introduction of modularisation in early 2005 which pre-empted the position of a modular curriculum as a national priority in higher education in response to external agencies' policy advice. Modularisation, as a national priority, responded to the national sectoral recommendation of the EUA and OECD. The HEA Deputy Director acknowledged that due to Ireland's size looking externally was important:

We do tend to look externally and try to get recognition externally of what we are trying to do. As a small country, we need to do that and to get that kind of validation (I.13).

5.4.3 Incentivisation and Modularisation

The 'Strategic Innovation Fund' (SIF) demonstrates how a policy, e.g. modularisation reverberates between the universities, HEA, DES and external agencies and demonstrates how the HEA attempts to 'reorient the system or incentivise the universities' behaviour' through funding. The Minister for Education and Science's speech, 'Implementing the OECD Report' on 25th April 2005 announced the introduction of the SIF, in response to OECD 2004 recommendations. It was delivered at the launch of the EUA 'Review of Quality Assurance in Irish Universities' Sectoral Report. This review was commissioned by the HEA and IUQB in fulfillment of 1997 Universities Act requirements for universities. The EUA was commissioned to conduct the review by the HEA and IUQB. It highlighted the potential of modularisation for Irish institutions including 'curricular reform, student recruitment, internationalisation and social inclusion' (UCD, 2005a: 6), as well as the universities' inactivity regarding Bologna:

The Bologna Process is now six years old and the effects of these fundamental reforms are beginning to be seen across Europe, including in Irish universities which have only recently become fully aware of the extent to which this process will also affect them. (EUA, 2005: 10).

The Minister highlighted in her address Ireland's objective for higher education 'to be at the front-rank of performance within the OECD'. To achieve this, she recommended 'a system-wide approach' and the attainment of 'inter-institutional collaboration':

The OECD report makes a number of recommendations on the need for internal capacity building within higher education institutions, if they are to deliver on the broad agenda faced. Re-organisation of faculties and departments, the introduction of new internal management and resource allocation processes, the development of new management information systems and administrative streamlining are some of the issues raised. This is already being reflected in changed activities across a number of institutions.

The Government recognises the reform efforts required and are underway. It has agreed that they should be promoted and supported through accelerated prime funding. I am delighted to announce today that the Government has now agreed to the establishment of a Strategic Innovation Fund for this purpose. The Strategic Innovation Fund will enable higher education institutions to:

- introduce teaching and learning reforms, including enhanced teaching methods, programme re-structuring, modularisation and e-learning*:

(Minister for Education and Science, 2005).

*Other initiatives were also listed here but are not relevant to the study.

The SIF encouraged modularisation and other policies, including internationalisation and lifelong learning practices, by 'incentivising behaviour in the system' with a €510 million multi-annual fund 2006-2013 (IUA, 2009). It was:

... the main mechanism that we can use because the funding is the main way that you can get that [sector] to change their behaviours. The whole emphasis on SIF is of course on collaboration so the more you collaborate you can get the better between institutions (I.13).

By the time the EUA Sectoral Review was completed, UCD had begun development, but not implementation, of its modular policy. At School level, the Vice Principal for Teaching and Learning perceived that the SIF encouraged

alterations in an understated fashion through ‘funding for changing curriculum and changing organizational structures’. This funding was perceived as an incentive and a reward for universities who had begun to implement the prioritised reforms, e.g. modularisation. A member of HEA staff viewed the modularisation of programmes as a ‘progressive’ reform because of its appeal to part-time learners and inter-institutional collaboration:

... I think it is certainly the way that the HEA would see the whole sector is going. More flexible ways of providing programmes and allowing students to be more flexible with the pace at which they can learn and that type of thing definitely. I think it can be developed even further. If there was modularisation where you can carry a module from UCD and bring it to Trinity or to UCC. That would be the ideal. So, credit-based learning and the flexibility that it affords and how it fits in with the whole lifelong learning agenda would be certainly something that we would support, strongly. It would be seen as something internationally that would be of value, I think. Undoubtedly, it was a big plus for UCD(I.13).

The former Adviser to the Minister of Education and Science highlighted the ‘need to open access to higher education’ nationally (I.12). Modularisation was seen to attend to a ‘more diverse student cohort’:

And the shift in focus towards outcomes and the wider policy considerations around the need to open access to higher education to encourage you know a more diverse student cohort, to promote modularisation as part of doing that. And the sort of blurring if you like of the distinction between full-time and part-time, all of which we would have wanted to encourage (I.12).

The recommendation for increased part-time and a more diverse, internationalised student body also resonated with the OECD 2004 Review. An insight into this review is discussed now. The policy mechanisms used by the OECD are explored in Section 5.6.3.

5.4.4 OECD 2004 Review of Higher Education

Generally, the OECD was seen as a 'strong influence' in Irish higher education. (See Chapter 2.4). The 2004 Review's context was preceded by budget cuts to higher education funding in 2002. There was:

... a need to state the government's commitments in some way to developing the higher education system because we had been talking the rhetoric of the knowledge economy and developing as a knowledge economy and then the view of the system was 'well how do you reconcile that to pause PRTL funding in 2002, taking €50 million out of the core budgets of institutions (I.12).

Consequently, the OECD Report was commissioned and 'a long term agenda flowed from the OECD report' (I.12). Though some 'quick hits' were implemented (e.g. SIF funding), suggestions of inter-institution collaboration and a reduction of HEI's was less explicit. When asked why all recommendations were not implemented, the former Adviser to the Minister responded that the Review never represented a strategy, but 'a diagnosis' and 'a prescription', as ultimately 'the government decides what it wants to do' (I.12). Respondents from UCD and the IUA perceived that the OECD report 'fell on deaf ears' (I.11) at a national level.

In terms of the OECD's relationship with the EU, an EC Policy Officer suggested that there are 'a lot of common points' (I. 17) with the OECD in terms of higher education policy. A Commission Policy Officer outlined that 'there is almost no difference between their objectives and ours' (I.19). An OECD consultant perceived that there was also little difference between the agenda's OECD and EU's policies by outlining that the OECD was 'primarily a policy think-tank', while the EU is a 'policy-enacting organisation' (I. 20). The Head of OECD IHME also suggested a similarity of agendas:

There certainly isn't collusion but we do talk to each other. I mean obviously member countries and governments who are members of several international organisations exert perfectly legitimate pressure on us to

coordinate what we are doing, not to duplicate or to waste their money. We have regular discussions at a secretariat level and contacts with people at the World Bank, the European Commission, and other organisations (I.21).

As outlined in Section 3.5, the EU does not have a formal role in education policy due to subsidiarity. It does, however, have a role in the Bologna Process which is now explored.

5.5 The Bologna Process: A European Policy Field

The Bologna Process, while it is a policy process in its own right, it is also implicitly related to the attainment of the ideals of the EU:

Ministers reaffirm the importance of the social dimension of the Bologna Process. The need to increase competitiveness must be balanced with the objective of improving the social characteristics of the European Higher Education Area, aiming at strengthening social cohesion and reducing social and gender inequalities, both at national and at European level. In that context, Ministers reaffirm their position that higher education is a public good and a public responsibility. They emphasise that in international academic cooperation and exchanges, academic values should prevail. Ministers take into due consideration the conclusions of the European Councils in Lisbon (2000) and Barcelona (2002) aimed at making Europe “the most competitive and dynamic knowledge-based economy in the world, capable of sustainable economic growth with more and better jobs and greater social cohesion” and calling for further action and closer co-operation in the context of the Bologna Process (Berlin Communiqué, 2003: 1-2).

The Bologna Process contributes to the construction of the EU and draws upon the universities of Europe, as sites for EU advancement. This is not a new concept in European history. (See Section 2.4). The Bologna Declaration was a joint declaration of the European Ministers with responsibility for higher education outlining six common objectives. (See Chapter 3.5). It is managed regionally through a work programme, receiving direction from ministerial biennial conferences, e.g. Berlin (2003) and representing a top-down setting of objectives. As

per Section 2.4, the EU member countries and the European Commission are recognised as full members.

Irish engagement with the Bologna Process emanated from national interest. A DES official suggested that in his experience ‘...Ireland tends to be relaxed in terms of implementing EU Directives’ where they are not perceived to be of direct interest (I.12):

From a policy point of view, we always saw the importance of Bologna. I mean, certainly where it fits with the wider Lisbon Agenda, and our own objectives for the developing the knowledge economy and so on. Ireland has officially has always seen, whatever what people vote on ‘Lisbon’* or whatever, has always seen its role in Europe as being important to the strategic national interest, and particularly our economy interests. From an education perspective, issues around student mobility and, you know, recognition of qualifications, and so on, clearly for an open economy like ourselves, in terms of attracting international investors and selling ourselves, as a skilled high skilled economy (I.12).

* The reference to ‘Lisbon’ refers to the rejection of the Lisbon Treaty in the June 2008 referendum.

The comparison above of the Bologna Process to EU Directives is an interesting comment, given that the Bologna Process is the responsibility of the member countries, not the EU. As per Section 3.4.1.2, education is not recognised as a European-level responsibility since the Treaty of Rome and this remains the case.

5.5.1 National Coordination of the Bologna Process

In Ireland, BFUG representatives are staff members of the DES. As acknowledged, the DES interacts with the universities ‘in a very, very loose way’ (I.15) and, the role of Minister of Education and Science and DES in the Bologna Process, was assessed by all as quite minimal. In Ireland, the Bologna Declaration was signed by a Principal Officer from the DES, not a Minister. At the time, it was perceived by a number of interviewees that ‘Bologna wasn’t going to have a big impact on Ireland’ (I.12).

A senior member of the DES acknowledged that the motivation of biennial ministerial conferences created momentum due to a 'desire to be able to present progress at those milestone meetings' (I.12). He highlighted that a 'certain natural impetus' emanating from these meetings and their provision of 'very real targets to work towards'. As well as the work programme established at these meetings, the progress completed by member countries was also peer reviewed, e.g. Stocktaking Reports. (See Section 5.6.3).

The implementation of priorities remained the responsibility of the country and in Ireland, a National Steering Group (NSG) was established to report on Ireland's progress to the BFUG and liaised with the disparate Irish stakeholders, 'as the implementation vehicle for delivering from follow-up actions' (I.12). This Steering Group was an informal arrangement and reliant on the voluntary engagement of its participants. The NSG met regularly in the early stages of the Bologna Process and less frequently as goals were achieved. It was constituted from a wide range of stakeholders including HEA, NQAI, IUA, IUQB, the Council of Directors of Institutes of Technology, the Dublin Institute of Technology (DIT), the Higher Education and Training Awards Council (HETAC), the Union of Students of Ireland (USI), the Teachers Union of Ireland (TUI) and the Irish Federation of University Teachers (IFUT). UCD and its interests were represented through the IUA. The DES chaired these meetings, using it to disseminate information arising from the BFUG, Communiqués from Ministerial meetings at Berlin/Bergen, etc., and to prepare Ireland's biennial report for the inter-ministerial meetings.

5.5.2 Irish Influence on the Bologna Process

In addition to its participation, Ireland was perceived to influence the Bologna agenda. According to the Minister's former Adviser and attendee at the Berlin Interministerial Conference, this influence appeared strongest during the 2004

European Presidency. When Ireland held the Presidency, it was a member of the Bologna BFUG 'Trica' (i.e. 'pre, during and post the presidency governance'). The DES representatives were eager to be seen to be making progress:

I think because we had taken a leadership role in the wider Bologna Process, we were keen to, I suppose, to be there at the sort-of the forefront of the advances on the overall agenda. I think if we were more, I suppose, if we were less involved in actually driving the process centrally, we would have been more relaxed about our own position (I.12).

Ireland was perceived as progressive by the Commission, particularly regarding the establishment of NQF in 2003. This coincided with the preparation of the Bergen ministerial conference based on the experience of the Minister of Education's former Adviser:

In this whole discussion on the Qualifications Framework, Ireland is leading it. Together with Scotland, they are the only two countries that have a tested overall qualifications framework and have done their self-certification as they are supposed to do, checking whether their national qualifications framework is in agreement with both overarching European frameworks. There Ireland is active. (I.17)

In 2005, the Commission published a proposal for the European Qualification Framework. The preparation for the Bergen Communiqué was perceived to be influenced by the Dublin Descriptors and the Irish National Qualifications Framework by the Minister's Adviser. He believed through the BFUG, that Ireland influenced the shift from the '3+2' structure of higher education to outcome descriptors and indicators based on Irish higher education needs:

You could see, if you watch the language through those, there is a greater move, or not so gradual shift even, towards outcome descriptors and outcome indicators, rather than the '3+2' which was very much a kind of an input I think we would have been pushing that very much, as participants in the Bologna Follow-up Group (I.12).

‘3+2’ was no longer the appropriate description in terms of how we saw our own system evolve, and you know, with the development of the framework of qualifications and so on. And the shift in focus towards outcomes and the wider policy considerations [was] around the need to open access to higher education, to encourage, you know, a more diverse student cohort, to promote modularisation, as part of doing that (I.12).

In reviewing the interactions of the Irish state with the Bologna Process exemplified above, officially, it is the DES and the Minister of Education and Science who are the Irish official partners in the process of Bologna. This is despite the recognition of the HEA as the ‘national coordinating body’. (See Section 5.4.2 regarding the HEA’s in this Process).

5.5.3 The European Commission and the Bologna Process

The European Commission is the only full Bologna member which is not a country. It has been a major funder since the inception of the Bologna Process. The Council of Europe was cited as involved with development of the Diploma Supplement along with UNESCO CYPRES, the Commission and NARIC/ENIC and recognised its role as a ‘bridge’ between participating and non-participating countries benefitting from and contributing to a number of Bologna seminars (Council of Europe, 2003:2). However, of all the EU machinery, the European Commission was most engaged.

The Commission was keen to highlight that ‘Bologna is not a Commission initiative’ but it is an inter-governmental project driven by the European Ministers with responsibility for higher education (I.17). This contrasts somewhat with the suggestion that it is the member states, not the European ministers who have primary responsibility for Bologna. (See Section 2.4 for further discussion of the Bologna Process in Ireland). As the Bologna Process supports some of the Lisbon

Agenda (2000) objectives, it supports European Commission's (E.C.) work according to a Policy Officer at the Commission:

The other thing about the Bologna Process is that we think it is important and we support it but it is not our baby. It fits in with the Lisbon Agenda. Shortly after the creation of or invention of the Lisbon Strategy in 2000 or even a year after or so, the Council decided that education and training had a vital role to play, if we want to get even close to the Lisbon objectives. Both for the competitiveness of European societies and the social cohesion and other social phenomena, like migration and so on. In all these areas, you need good and efficient education and training systems (I.17).

While the EC does not govern the Bologna Process, an E.C. Policy Officer highlighted that five of the six Bologna objectives mirror those pursued by the EU through the Erasmus Programme in the 1980's. In his experience, the only difference was Bologna's promotion of the two cycle system of Bachelors and Masters which was not on the E.C.'s agenda:

I always point out that five out of the six original Bologna objectives of the '99 Declaration were inspired by Erasmus. The whole vision for a European Higher Education Area of people moving freely around Europe for study and teaching and so on was planted in the minds of people by the fact that, hundreds of thousands of students had been mobile and 10,000s of professors. In particular, European co-operation in quality assurance, which was one point of the Bologna Declaration, that had been anticipated by a pilot project that the Commission had started in '95, I think and it lead to a first recommendation in '98 on how European higher education institutions and governments should co-operate in quality assurance in higher education (I.17).

In terms of modularisation, a Policy Officer at the EC highlighted that:

... the Commission has no specific policy position regarding modularisation. As said in the interview the most added value of modularisation, I see in the framework of lifelong learning, as by modularisation you can meet the demands of non-traditional learners (like adults, employees) more flexible and tailor-made (I.19).

The EC's 'backseat' role in the Bologna Process was also confirmed by an attendee of the BFUG who perceived that the Commission allowed signatories to 'identify their own priorities' (I.12). He perceived that the Commission was not a 'significant player', having unsuccessfully tried to carve out a role earlier in the Bologna Process. As the Process developed momentum, the role for the Commission was minimised. The former Adviser to the Minister of Education and Science in Ireland suggested that once the process was proceeding as the Commission wished, there had been no 'need to come in the heavy or to take ownership of it' (I.12). Consequently, he categorised the Commission as 'interested and willing partners rather than a major driver'. The Commission acknowledged this implicit role and perceived its involvement predominantly through practical support:

We support a number of projects that try to help implement it at the working level like the Bologna Promoters within the EU, that is for the 27 EU countries and the European Economic Area (I.17).

... because it would be extremely difficult for these very heterogeneous club of 46 countries to agree on funding anything. They can agree to a limit. They can agree on the objectives but then when it would be about putting money on the table, it would be difficult to have Albania and the Vatican and Norway agree on anything. So normally, that is where the Commission steps in (I.17).

5.5.4. Funding of the Bologna Process

While the EC staff did not perceive the EC as a 'major player' in the policy process, financially it funded key aspects of the Bologna Process. Key categories of Commission funding included reporting, 'Tuning' and training.

(a) Funding for Reporting

Three aspects of funding for reporting on the Bologna Process progress were highlighted: the government perspective (i.e. the 'Stocktaking' Reports), the institutional view (i.e. the 'Trends' Reports) and the students' view (i.e. 'Through

Students Eyes'). An EC Policy Officer acknowledged that these reports were compiled by external agencies:

All this is carried out by researchers and so on, but the money comes from us because we think it is worthwhile (I.17).

When asked about any influence the EC may exert over funded reports, the Commission insisted that they remain neutral regarding the content and do not set any agenda. This allowed the Commission with an insight into the countries while not being constricted to a single agenda. For The Trends Report, the EUA is described by the Commission as a 'customer' (I.17). This type of relationship with 'customer' organisations provided a more flexible agenda:

We don't want to be too tied down so it is very useful for us to use them to reach our target groups (I.19).

(b) Funding for Tuning

A second strand of EC funding was the Tuning Process. Three Cycles of 'Tuning' focused on coordinating educational structures at the subject area level. Managed by coordinators at the Universities of Deusto and Groningen, it developed a framework of comparable qualifications for the Bologna Process signatories, regarding workload, learning outcomes and competences for the EHEA. It worked directly with national representatives for 11 subject areas at European universities. UCD was involved in the Tuning Project through the Professor of Education who represented the 'Education Sciences' Subject Area for Ireland. The initiative allowed universities to collaborate and engage with the Bologna Process, facilitating 'a bottom up' approach between the institutions.

(c) Funding for Training

A third activity was the appointment and training of national Bologna Promoters. Six senior academics/administrators and one student representative were annually

appointed to promote the Bologna Process. Seven Bologna Promoters, recently called Bologna Experts, were appointed by the HEA and approved by the DES. Selected for their knowledge of quality assurance, qualifications frameworks and recognition issues, their training occurred in Brussels:

Generally, the way we use them is for awareness raising across the section. We would organise a number of seminars each year and we would use the promoters in this, trying to just disseminate and raise awareness about the issues..... we have made it known that they are a resource for any institution. If any institution would like to host an event and ask one of them to come down and talk about quality assurance, the European Guidelines for Quality Assurance or the development of national frameworks and the European framework for qualifications that they could come and talk and have an internal discussion (I.13).

Basically, every year when you start, the Commission has a conference for Bologna Promoters. Actually, I think it is early July. They have a number of events throughout the year that you can go to. You can use some of the money that they give you to fund attendance at these events. The first event I went to was when all the Bologna Promoters from all the different countries were there (I.23).

A UCD Bologna Promoter was first appointed in 2008. Reference to the Bologna Promoters appeared to be absent at the time of UCD's modularisation. In discussing the influence exerted by the Bologna Promoters, a former Promoter perceived this network as the 'weakest group of actors' in the Process:

For most people it is a title. But you will notice that the people who are there are usually very involved and at the coalface of reform but in other capacities (I.23).

While the Commission acknowledged no direct responsibility for the 'Process', it did provoke discussion and networking contributing to EHEA establishment through individual academics, institutions and the countries. An EC Policy Officer highlighted that the Commission 'pay[s] to stimulate a network', as the

Commission has no mandate over the universities or countries regarding education (I.19):

As you say, we are a commission, as nature as it were, we deal with governments. That is the nature partners for the commission. We reach out to all the other players in the field, through projects that we are funding. We reach into the institutions and into circles of professors by supporting projects that are run by professors for professors, or by universities for universities. For example, most of the projects that the European University Association does, starting with the Trends Reports and so on, it is funded through the Commission. We could not approach these circles directly. We have no mandate to do so (I.19).

We can't do it ourselves (I.19).

While, there was no bi-lateral discussion between the Commission and a member country regarding Bologna, agencies consulted by the EC included the EUA, the European Teachers Association, the European Students Union, the Erasmus Students' Network, and smaller think-tanks, e.g. the Centre for Higher Education Policy Studies in Twente, European Foundation for the Strategic Management of Universities, Eurydice (the institutional network for gathering, monitoring, processing and circulating European information on education systems and policies).

In conclusion, the EC has a unique role in the Bologna Process, demonstrated through the Commission's funding of key Bologna activities. The pervasive nature of the Process is difficult to assess as it engages directly with individual academics and institutions, e.g. through the Bologna Promoters, Tuning Process and Trends. This criss-crossing of policy gently pollinates a European policy field.

5.6. Higher Education Policy Mechanisms

Having outlined the key institutions influencing national and institutional higher education policy, the 'mechanisms' of policy transfer are reviewed. National and international actors engaged with the higher education institutions explicitly and implicitly. External agencies (specifically the EUA and OECD) were invited to review policy by national statutory agencies and this then underpinned government policy. Generally, the higher education community in Ireland was described as a 'highly networked system' (I.15):

By the time, we get there [a meeting of the NSG], we all know what is going on anyway (I.16).

There was a common perception amongst those working in Irish higher education policy that public policy operated on an informal and unsophisticated basis:

There isn't a structured policy input process into government in most cases. Although it has gotten better in some areas in recent years and there is a lot of networking but we are not terribly disciplined either. So, we might try and put together principles but then people will run off and implement them in different ways that suits their requirements (Unattributed).

5.6.1 Policy Mechanisms

Dale's framework (1999) outlined the mechanisms of external effects on national policy including borrowing, learning, harmonisation, dissemination, standardisation, installing interdependence and imposition. (See Chapter 3.2.3). This framework will be used to discuss the mechanisms visible in the case of UCD's initiative on modularisation. While Dale (1999) discussed these policy mechanisms at a national level, this framework is used to also discuss these mechanisms at an institutional level in the absence of relevant institutional typology.

5.6.2 Borrowing and Imitation

The first mechanism that Dale (1999) suggested was policy borrowing. At a national level, there was little evidence of direct borrowing. There was evidence of the current policy rhetoric of developed societies, of internationalising higher education, pursuing a lifelong learning agenda and a knowledge economy. (See Minister's April 2005 speech in Appendix Eleven). Reference was made to Ireland's pursuit of the Lisbon Agenda. While this regional agenda was important, the absent references to Irish agencies or other HEIs are noted.

5.6.2.1 The UK, USA and Canada

At institutional level, voluntary borrowing and imitation of policies were directly evident in UCD's formulation of a modular policy. As well as the influence derived from the SMT's experience of US modular systems, policy was explicitly borrowed from overseas practice, especially the UK. The introduction of learning outcomes and a Grade Point Average (GPA) system exemplify policies which UCD imitated. A number of interviewees referred to the UK experience when asked about the decisions regarding UCD's modular system. Additionally, the experience of staff members who worked in the UK informed the policy development, e.g. when asked about the origins of policy, the Director for Internationalisation at the School of Business suggested that UCD's Central Administration 'borrowed' policy:

I think they were just borrowed to be honest. That is my own view. Because the stuff just appeared like overnight and there was reams and reams of stuff and no one at the 'Centre' could have sat down and put all of that together from scratch. Absolutely no one, you know. And I don't think there was too much thought put into what was being implemented. I think they understood the broad principles but then they got caught up in the fine detail and become obsessed with the fine detail (I.9).

The Registrar admitted to drawing on reference systems and other institutions to design the system, rather than national references:

For instance, I would go and look at state universities in the US. I wouldn't go to Harvard. The reason is there is no point even trying to do what they do there... For certain initiatives it is going to see it, as it is done the best place it is done for something that is narrow in scope. But for something that is institution wide in scope, I tend to look at the Canadian model because it's funding and funding basis and its culture is closer to ours than the American might be. But then, I think the fundamental thing is....well the other system we looked at a lot was Scotland. And one of the major drivers was that X [Former director of Academic Affairs] had worked there (I.2).

Evidence of direct policy borrowing is further exemplified through the policies of the GPA and learning outcomes. First borrowing on experience from the UK, USA and Canada, UCD aspired that its GPA system would be compatible with national norms (defined as NUI norms), the US, the UK and other international norms (defined as the EU and Canada), despite the anticipated complexity of harmonising different systems (UCD: 2004, 2):

A scheme is proposed where a student who takes higher level modules is more likely to achieve an honours degree, with the objective of incentivising and rewarding such students. However, the drawback is that the system is complex, difficult to understand and unusual, largely because it combines a UK concept (honours) with a US approach (GPA) (UCD: 2004, 9).

Analysis of UCD modular documents highlighted the status awarded to UK agencies by the Registrar and Central Administration. This is illustrated by the use of the Code of Practice from the UK Quality Assurance Agency in the discussion of the key principles governing grading and assessment in a modular environment (UCD: 2004, 1). Other UK references cited in this document and the 'Guide to Alignment of Learning Outcomes', including the Higher Education Academy, Credits and Qualifications Framework for Wales (CQFW), Northern Ireland Credit Accumulation and Transfer System (NICATS), UK Northern Universities Consortium on Credit Accumulation and Transfer (NUCCAT) and South East Consortium, for Credit Accumulation and Transfer (SEEC). While policy borrowing from the UK was noted, of equal note is the absence of reference to Irish agencies.

Second, the introduction of learning outcomes exemplifies policy borrowing. These outcomes were perceived as a key to modularisation by UCD respondents. In making the case for their introduction, outcomes were 'referred to extensively in the Bologna related documents, seminar reports and the Berlin Communiqué' (UCD, 2005d:2). Other definitions which UCD drew upon to explain learning outcomes included the Credit Guidelines from SEEC, NICCAT and NUCCAT, Final Report of the Socrates Project (Tuning Project), 2004 ECTS User's Guide (EC) and US Council for Higher Education Accreditation. Particularly, a Teaching and Learning Officer highlighted the UK influence on the development of UCD's learning outcomes:

So, as I say, I think that the UK experience actually did help inform the Irish experience, in that the prescriptiveness of modularisation in the UK had learnt about that experience and therefore, UCD was prescriptive only to the point of Bologna really but not prescriptive in, you know, 'This learning outcome... that you can only have so many assessments or every learning outcome has to be assessed through something ...' (I.5).

The experience of UK was also used to inform what should not occur at UCD. UCD's decision not to use learning outcomes as a threshold was based on the UK experience:

... UCD will not be adopting the common UK practice of writing outcomes that define the minimum acceptable or threshold standards. Rather, outcomes should be written as general performance indicators that can be achieved with different levels of competences and understanding (UCD, 2005d: 4).

From the documentary analysis above, UCD's modular policy, and constituent aspects of it was consciously 'borrowed' from sources outside of Ireland. No Irish institutions appear to inform policy discussions due to the existent competitive context. Multiple policies, principally from UK, were imitated on a voluntary basis

and had a direct effect on UCD's framework. Such borrowing appears to have stemmed from a desire to have compatibility between UCD's systems and other international institutions.

5.6.3 Dissemination

Dissemination appeared more frequently at a national level through engagement with the OECD and the Bologna Process. The OECD reports exemplify a formal voluntary report, requested by the Minister and then set an agenda nationally and institutionally. Equally, the Bologna Process demonstrated a formal intergovernmental relationship, explicitly influencing policy nationally and institutionally and disseminating peer countries' progress. Both are discussed.

First, policy dissemination generally created an external policy context which influenced UCD's policy. At a national level, reference was made to the dissemination of OECD reports, particularly the 2004 Report. This 2004 report was used to directly set policy objectives, as exemplified by the SIF Funding (section 5.4.3.). Contrary to Dale's (1999) suggestion that dissemination was internationally instigated, this was initiated by the Irish government, in response to a need to re-affirm national priorities. As outlined, UCD's desire to reform was strongly associated with this report. A former SMT member highlighted the OECD's recommendation to create higher education institutions of international status directly informed UCD's strategy:

But there is no question that the rhetoric, at least, of the OECD report which was about building world class institutions formed the development of UCD'S Strategic Plan avowedly (I.11).

While the OECD's 'Education at a Glance' reports were highlighted by UCD's Registrar as useful, he highlighted that the OECD policy was more about sectoral, rather than institutional change and only implicitly informed UCD's trajectory:

Part of it is ideological as in a university setting, with saying the source of your policy initiative is the OECD. Partly, it is scope, that we are talking about measles⁶ level strategic change, institutional level strategic change. The OECD is exceptionally important, if you are trying to set national policy. This is back to the HEA issue. If the HEA were clearly articulating a medium-term strategy and objectives for the sector, then we would be paying much more attention to what the OECD are saying because that would be influencing what the HEA were saying. We would want to know what that influence was and say, if we can balance it with other views but at the institutional level, I would find we are using the EUA a lot as a source of common sense.... a sense of common strategic direction across Europe (I.2).

Second, dissemination was associated with the Bologna Process. The presence of the OMC and the Stocktaking Reports helped establish a national and institutional agenda explicitly and implicitly. Since 2005, there was an increasingly collaborative relationship amongst countries emanating from a shared European agenda which resembled the OMC. An EC Policy Officer suggested that OMC had been a positive development, helping countries and the EU Commission to question their role in the policy process. The OMC is an EC governance tool and thus, does not govern the Bologna Process. The Bologna Process does, however, resemble the OMC, using similar tools including indicators and best practice. Describing it as the 'new spirit' of European policy development, an EC policy officer commented that OMC allowed countries, 'to exchange good and bad practice: to get help from others':

The Method of Open Coordination is a good way to get something out of it [policy development] but it is the farthest you can go. In some areas, you can also have good objectives like in the Framework of the E and T (Education and Training) Programme, we have some indicators and in Lisbon, and then put some political pressure. But it is mainly about facilitating and exchanges of best practices for the levels. That is also a question for ourselves. Who do we reach with these instruments because most of the time, they are governmental representatives? Are these the ones we want to speak to or do we work with a big field of intermediary organisations for that purpose? (I.19)

⁶ The word 'measles' is used by the interviewee to illustrate the fragmented approach to strategic change. It was used to infer diffuse and patchy evidence of change, rather than unified.

The most visible change happened early in this decade when the countries realised that they had more to gain than to lose by sitting down together and that they would not lose anything of their sovereignty by agreeing on common objectives. They felt there was a need for common objectives in all sorts of areas but also, most of all; foremost in education and training because PISA had come as a shock to many countries. PISA came out, I think in 2001 and also the Bologna Process had somehow stimulated this approach of defining a common agenda. By defining common objectives, you can still decide on how you get there. You fix where you want to get and then it is for you, for each country and their institutions, to decide which paths they take to reach that objective (I.17).

Due to political pressure, 'you [the EC] can't go too far as in the first place. There is national autonomy' (I.19). Rather the OMC makes member countries 'willing to see themselves named and shamed for doing a bad job':

It is a mental change towards agreeing on common objectives and being able to admit ones own weakness and receiving advice from others which is very clear (I.17).

Reporting tools for Bologna, e.g. 'Trends' (completed by the EUA), 'Stocktaking' (completed by the BFUG) and 'Through Student Eyes' (completed by the European Student's Union) mirror the OMC. Particularly, the peer tools of indicators and goal achievement formed the basis of the Stocktaking Reports introduced in 2005. It benchmarks attainment (through the Bologna Scorecard) for the different countries and stimulates an exchange of good and bad practice. The first Stocktaking Report was requested in 2003 at the Berlin Ministerial meeting and the Stocktaking Working Group in 2004 was chaired by a DES member (BFUG, 2005). Interviewees at the EC, the HEA and DES read these reports 'with caution', as countries self-report their progress. The first Stocktaking Report was particularly important for Ireland, as holders of the Europe Presidency:

...they [the stocktaking reports] would be seen as important documents because they would have given the visibility to the state of progress in the countries and there was a desire on our part, particularly in the run up to the

Presidency and so on, to be there, as I say, among the leading countries of progress on it (I.12).

In 2005, the Working Group on Stocktaking reviewed the three action lines associated with the Berlin Communiqué and developed criteria for the action lines (BFUG, 2005: 15). Each criterion was presented against agreed benchmarks and colour-coded. (See Appendix Twelve for Ireland's Stocktaking Scorecard). The report benchmarked each country's progress against each other. An example of these cross country comparisons is provided in Appendix Thirteen.

5.6.4 Imposition

The explicit and implicit imposition of policy is now explored.

5.6.4.1 Explicit Imposition

At a national level, it was a legal requirement for Irish universities to conduct a quality assurance review on each programme, under the Universities Act 1997. This provided a context for the introduction of some of the Bologna objectives including ECTS and learner outcomes. The locus of the viability of this policy was at national level, rather than at international level, as suggested by Dale (1999). The Universities Act 1997 provided the HEA, and thus the IUQB, with a role in quality assurance but other than that, there was an absence of legislation. One interviewee suggested that as higher education became of greater 'strategic importance', the government had tried to become more interventionist in the absence of greater statutory control:

The strategic importance of higher education has shot up in government policy agendas ever since. They are not quite sure how to deal with it. And so, they pretended to become more interventionist or tried to be. They realised that they don't have the tools for that. There is an absence of legislation (I.16).

The ECTS is enshrined in law as the credit accumulation system in a large number of countries. In Ireland, there is no legislation governing the university arrangements for ECTS.

5.6.4.2 Implicit Imposition

While compulsory imposition did not force the Irish universities to comply with the Bologna Objectives, the Bologna Process held such status that some believed that there were punitive measures for non-compliance. The regulations of the modular curriculum emanated from UCD centrally, with limited flexibility in the form of derogations. While the Bologna objectives were not 'imposed' upon UCD, the status awarded to it by the university was so great, that the Vice Principal for Teaching and Learning at the College believed that the Bologna Process was imposed, due to a legal mandate:

I.1: I thought it [the Bologna Process] was legal? Is it not?

Interviewer: No, there is no legal mandate over education in the European Union, at all. It is through soft methods of compliance essentially.

I.1: No. Why were we signing up? No, why were we signing up to it. What was the big deal? That was the carrot, or thing or wand that was thrown by us that Bologna, was that we had to comply with.

It appears that apart from the perceived Bologna-related imposition of the modular framework on the School of Business and the legally imposed quality assurance measures of the Universities Act 1997, that there was no evidence of policy imposition.

5.6.5 Harmonisation

Harmonisation, as a policy mechanism, occurred at the institutional, national and regional levels as institutions pursued Bologna Objectives. First UCD harmonised its programme offerings across different schools. Programme structures at undergraduate and postgraduate levels and module workloads were harmonised,

for the full strengths of modularisation to be realised. It contributed not only to the Bologna Process but to the idea of an Irish system of higher education which was a reoccurring theme during interviews. The ideal of inter-university collaboration and an Irish system of higher education appeared to be an underlying principle associated with the future possibilities of modularisation. (See 5.4.3 regarding the possibilities of modularisation as outlined by the SIF).

Regionally, the Bologna Declaration is stated as not 'just a political statement, but a binding commitment to an action programme' (European Commission, 2000: 4).

The Declaration itself was an undertaking by the participating countries to:

... engage in coordinating our policies to reach in the short term, and in any case within the first decade of the third millennium, the following objectives, which we consider to be of primary relevance in order to establish the European area of higher education and to promote the European system of higher education world-wide' (European Commission, 2000: 3).

It undertakes that countries will work towards 'creating convergence', rather than 'standardisation' or 'uniformisation' (European Commission, 2000:3). The above example of ECTS at UCD is evidence of such harmonisation, driven by the university, in response an institutional and national drive to participate in the EHEA. (See 5.3.1 regarding the sources of external influences identified by UCD policy makers). Harmonisation was evident, though to a less extent, through the university's participation with the Tuning Process.

In reforming UCD's curricular structure, harmonisation with the Irish National Qualifications Framework was achieved and by default, with the European Qualifications Framework, adopted by the European Parliament and Council in 2008. In reviewing the minor and major award types of the university, award types are consistent with the National Qualifications Framework. UCD General Regulations cite:

The National Qualifications Authority of Ireland (NQAI), through the National Framework of Qualifications (NFQ), has established criteria for both the level and type of the University's awards. (UCD, 2006:6).

In summary, policy harmonisation was perceived as necessary at an institutional level for comparison of university awards against national and European awards. Policy documents and interviewees explicitly make reference to UCD's desire to harmonise its offerings with the Bologna Process and with other countries, e.g. the introduction of its GPA. This provided a strong rationale for the introduction of modularisation, stimulating policy discourse locally within UCD and contributing to harmonisation with other third level programmes in Ireland. While UCD worked to implement the Bologna Objectives, the DES and the HEA were not explicitly involved due to university autonomy and loosely outlined their expectation for the universities to implement Bologna. (See Section 5.5.1 for discussion of the national coordination of the Bologna Process).

5.6.6 Installing Interdependence

Interdependence was explicitly installed by participating in the Bologna Process at institutional, national and European levels. Mutual dependence was created through a number of activities discussed below. In the first instance, the Bologna Declaration installed interdependence internationally amongst member states in setting, monitoring and realising objectives at the biennial communiqués. This required interdependence with the signatory countries and EC and other BFUG consultative members. (See Section 2.4). The former Adviser to the Minister described the involvement required with the different actors:

The long term work programme, if you like, over a two year period, if you like, is established by the ministerial group so whether it is the Bologna thing itself, the Berlin Communiqué, the London Communiqué, it sets out priority actions and that essentially, sets out the long term work agenda which the National Steering Group would work off and establish its own work

programme around. You would have more regular meetings with the follow-up group then in the meantime. And obviously, it would be taking stock of progress on wider follow-up actions and would be presenting reports from working groups and whatever else. That would set, I suppose, the shorter term agenda for the steering group that it would be formulating positions around issues that were arising. It is kind of a circular process, in a way, but it is really all about moving forward on those broader long term actions....(I.12).

Second, interdependence was required at a national level, by participating in the Bologna Process through the NSG's periodic preparation of the Background Reports and dissemination of policy objectives. (See Section 5.5.1. for a discussion of the NSG). UCD was represented by the IUA at the NSG.

This visible interdependence between institutional, national and international levels was exemplified by the UCD representative involved with the Tuning Project, who outlined a mutual dependence amongst national and international representatives:

The project was financed by the Commission of the EU. They were very, very interested in the work of the project. We would start with a general meeting of all the participants in all the subject area groupings on most occasions. This would generally fill the first working day of the meeting. We always had individuals from the Commission, like Jan Figel and representatives of other European stakeholder bodies (for example, employers, EUA, student unions) to address the conference because it was important for all stakeholders to buy into what was happening..... (I.22).

There were a number of people working on the whole area of ECTS, who were on different committees around Europe. There were Bologna Promoters, you know, in each of the subject areas. They would be Bologna Promoters from their own states. Then, there would be invitees from time to time from the different member states who would be represented (I.22).

This orchestrated a 'crisscross' of policy agents between different networks, groups involved with the Tuning Project, Bologna Promoters, the EC and other stakeholder groups. As highlighted, the Commission 'stimulates' these informal networks due

to restricted mandate for inter-governmental dialogue:

I.17: As I said our national partner that we speak to is the governments that are the ministries and the ministry people we talk to in the Peer Learning Activities. By the way, normally, the ministry is accompanied with someone from the higher education in our cluster that is someone from a higher education institution, so that it is not just the governments. But we would not organise ourselves, peer learning activities with universities people. We would pay

I.19: Pay to stimulate a network. That is what we do.

Interviewee 17: For example, to train the Bologna Promoters, that is not us. We go there and we attend the meetings and we influence the agenda but I think it is a legal thing that our natural partner to talk to is the governments and not any stakeholders.

This criss-cross of agendas is highlighted by the European agenda on quality assurance in Irish higher education. The establishment of the Irish Universities Quality Board was seen to provide for the institutional responsibility for quality assurance in Ireland but was established on the basis of anticipated requirements which would be asserted through the Bologna Process:

And Irish higher education generally, I think the universities in particular, had already put in a whole amount of thought into what is quality assurance and what are good principles and practices in quality assurance. We had foreseen some of the requirements which have since come through Bologna in terms of the European Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in Higher Education, in the IUQB, back in whenever it started. 2003, I think, it started to be formed. IUQB was to head off the possible establishment of a state agency to look after the universities in Ireland. That venture lasted five years but there will be a state agency that will look after everything in a two year timeframe, I think, at this stage. But, it never the less, laid important ground or a line in the sand, in terms of institutional responsibility, focus on improvement, focusing away from overly heavy bureaucratisation of a sort of a quality assurance exercise, independence, mainstreaming (I.16).

UCD's Registrar acknowledged the role of networks as a major source of influence on UCD's modular framework and highlighted how different networks contributed to it in 2005:

The transfer of knowledge is very different in these different networks. The IUA is a very formal, exchange of tips, you might say. 'What do you do about it?'... The EUA as a network produces these very formal documents which are also very useful and also very considered. Universitas 21, the major way we use that network is to go and visit the institutions in it, with specific strategic questions (I.2).

With the dissemination mechanisms outlined, there is a series of meetings, seminars and forums which convened actors from different stakeholder groups to 'crisscross' and cross pollinate ideas and agendas relating to Bologna. They demonstrate how a number of parallel processes operating on the Bologna Process, voluntarily 'criss-cross' and how the progress of different activities are disseminated across different forums, funded by the Commission, fuelled the momentum of the Bologna agenda at national and institutional levels. There was evidence of cross-pollination between the EU and OECD also. The EC has a seat on the 'Education Policy Committee at the OECD. Usually a member of the Education and Culture DG represents the Commission. UNSECO and the Council of Europe were invited to all committee meetings. The American Council of Education and the Association of Universities of Colleges and Universities of Canada also sit on this Committee.

5.6.7 Learning

In reviewing how policy 'learning' influenced UCD's decision to modularise, it happened through paradigmatic learning formally through international reports such as the OECD, EUA and WAG and less formally through the examples sourced on particular issues about the modular reforms. There was some limited evidence of 'normal' policy learning usually with Bologna themed seminars or organised events. An example of how 'paradigmatic' learning operates was the role of the OECD 2004 Review of Higher Education in Ireland which underpinned UCD's plans in 2005 'avowedly'. One OECD consultant reported that such National

Reviews encourage convergence across different countries with ‘standard formulae’ and ‘the same set of recommendations’.

In discussing this particular review with the Head of the OECD’s Programme for Institutional Management in Higher Education, he highlighted that individual national reviews were conducted for the member states and its peers:

The reviews are always, they are done for the benefit of the OECD as a whole, not only for the country which this being reviewed (I.21).

The report was seen to provide ‘benchmarking at national level’ and provided comparisons of Irish higher education regarding investment and participation against international counterparts. In this report, examples were provided of situations in the UK, USA and Australia where different approaches were taken to the governance, funding, re-introduction of fees for higher education and the internationalisation of the student body. These reports were seen as a tool to inform behaviour and allow countries to learn from each other. This OECD interviewee suggested that it does not try to ‘impose laws’ but are ‘negotiating’ and trying to ‘help’ member countries. An OECD consultant acknowledged that these reports were designed to encourage countries to alter behaviour based on what other countries may have done:

The point is that we are not trying to impose laws on anybody. We are negotiating. We are trying to help our member countries, whether they are member countries or member institutions, to fulfil their missions and objectives better. So, they might become thorny procedural issues if you were actually making some sort of declaration and you need to have a vote on, which is when the problem does arise (I.21).

But anyway, it spends its time indicating what other countries have done so it is not telling countries what to do but it is leading or it is guiding by example (I.20).

Learning appeared to occur on a paradigmatic scale too, e.g. the introduction of learning outcomes. The experiences of modularisation in the UK appeared to influence UCD's modular developments. (See Section 5.6.2 for further discussion). Reference to academic journals appeared in a number of the policy documents and highlighted a means of policy exchange across institutions and state divides.

5.6.7.1 Reference Institutions

In reviewing where the UK influence may have been drawn from, IUA Director of Academic Affairs suggested that while the IUA were not closely involved in the policy process, UCD was actively looking for 'information' on other institutions' modular policy and that UCD 'wasn't alone' in looking for 'information and data and other things':

We weren't intimately involved with them, in the planning or implementation but UCD certainly was looking for examples and was looking for, I wouldn't say guidance but, information about what else was going on. How it was working? What the learning had been in other institutions which had moved earlier? What could be done and how it could be done better really? They were certainly looking for that (I.16).

The Registrar agreed that the experiences of other institutions, in the US and more particularly Scotland and Canada, shaped the policy at UCD. Generally, the selection of institutions was based upon the perceived comparability of institutions and the prior relationship of himself or the policy team, with that institution:

Because in reality you want to be able to go to an institution and find out what is really happening. It is the easiest thing in the world and they give you the after dinner speech and they tell you how wonderful they are. But what you want really do is find out what didn't work and why they really do things. What you are really trying to do is find an institution which is a valid comparator and is kind of like yours in terms of structure, culture, funding and has succeeded in doing something very well. And second, you want them to tell you the truth. So if you know someone (I.2).

While frequent reference was made to the policy in UK, the University of Edinburgh featured in discussions with School staff. A number of interviewees perceived that Edinburgh was influential in the initiation of modularisation at UCD. Some staff perceived that the modular framework at University of Edinburgh (another Universitas 21 member institution) was held up as an exemplar:

During re-structuring we were reminded by the Registrar that Edinburgh was an example where change was effectively introduced (I.1).

If you compare Edinburgh policy documentation with that of UCD in certain parts, there are strong similarities between the two (I.1).

Despite this perceived comparison, there did not appear to be many common curricular policies between Edinburgh and UCD. The Registrar confirmed that the Edinburgh model was influential in the restructuring of UCD and in the approach to timetabling, rather than its modular framework:

We looked at the Scottish universities to see how they managed a modular curriculum and found that they didn't really have one. They took the old monolith and drew a few lines between them and said now we are modular. We were hoping for some help with that. But for instance at Edinburgh, they had done some really interesting work on their timetable and the entire long term success of modularisation depends on the timetable. You pick up little bits. But the real reason that we had looked at Edinburgh was in terms of restructuring. Their experiences positive and negatives were significant in terms of how we went about how we went about changes to structures (I.2).

It was noted that in May 2008, UCD joined the Universitas 21 network, which is an organisation of the 'worlds learning universities' (UCD, 2009c). University of Edinburgh is also a member of Universitas 21. UCD decided to join this international agency, at its own volition, after an invitation by Universitas 21 in 2006.

Another source of influence from Scotland was the appointment of the former UCD Director of Academic Affairs in 2004, who was heavily involved in creating UCD's modular framework and had previously been the Head of Quality Assurance at Napier University:

I think I got through modularisation because I had worked in a modular system because I had been involved in doing that process..... I was quite familiar with all of the... I suppose, the processes, the technical things that you need around it, the consequences, in terms of academic work, you know, operational activity.... (I.8).

When asked why UCD did not look at what policy experience might be learnt from other Irish institutions, the Registrar highlighted that the policy context was not conducive to policy sharing:

The atmosphere at the time was that there was a perception, whether it was valid or not, that UCD had been trundling along quietly for a while. Some of the other universities had been developing quite rapidly for a while. If you were looking at things like research income per faculty member, then Galway and DCU were doing very well for their size. Given that, it became very competitive very quickly within Ireland it was fair to say. Not exclusively competitive; there was still lots of exchange across the IUA Registrar's table, for instance about what we were doing and what we were not doing. But what I was receiving at the time and I was very new in the job, but it was 'it will all collapse', 'I wouldn't do that if I were you'. They might have been right (I. 2).

5.6.7.2 Academic Resources

Academic resources, e.g. academic articles and resources from other policy agencies, also informed policy at UCD. For example, in the 'Draft Guide to Alignment of Learning Outcomes and Assessment in the Modular Curriculum in UCD', there were some 22 academic references, predominantly from the UK, listed in the document's bibliography which influenced the policy regarding the creation of learning outcomes and their assessment at UCD. These academic references were largely based on policy ideals rather than examples as illustrated by this excerpt:

There is also a danger of ascribing to learning outcomes functions they cannot possibly have, namely;

1. the ability precisely, and in advance to specify all transactions that should take place within a given learning situation, and
2. the function of providing a checklist which, if met, indicates *conclusively*, that students have learned *all* they can or should.

It was to avoid such a misuse of learning outcomes that the D'Andrea (1993) model of learning outcomes is recommended.

(UCD, 2005d:4)

This policy of learning through best practice examples can also be associated with the Bologna activities, e.g. interministerial meetings, or Stocktaking, where examples and cases are outlined and which 'help' and facilitate learning from others. The sources of dimension of power exerted and the locus of policy learning appears to vary in this case. The various policies borrowed internationally from the USA, Canada and particularly the UK appear to have occurred in an explicit fashion and had a direct affect on the modular policy at UCD. It was voluntarily initiated at institutional level. This occurred against a larger backdrop of internationally initiated policy learning which was linked with the Bologna Process and occurred in a much looser and indirect fashion, yet resulting in the achievement of Bologna goals. The 'criss-cross' of parallel policies and cross pollination of policy instigated a pervasive policy context which directly influenced this institution.

5.6.8. Standardisation

Dale's (1999) final mechanism is standardisation. Modularisation was essentially perceived to be 'an attempt to streamline things', and 'an attempt to structure programmes in a way that standardises' across UCD. While the Bologna Declaration might suggest that it essentially attempts to encourage countries to "engage in coordinating [their] policies" and is described as 'creating convergence', rather than 'standardisation' or 'uniformisation' (European Commission, 2000: 3), the outcome of introducing a modular system in UCD which was compliant with

Bologna did introduce a standardisation of module weighting. As outlined, a derogation was required for undergraduate programmes which were to be more than 5 ECTS at UCD. Some element of standardisation was also required if the aspiration of a 'system of Irish higher education' outlined by the HEA were to be realised and it was possible to undertake modules at another higher education institution, a standard weighting would be required.

5.6.9 Beyond Dale's Typology

Dale (1999) provides a useful framework to review the mechanisms of policy transfer. As outlined in Chapter 3.2.3, it does not explain the realities of institutions responding to supranational policy or particularly in this case, European policy and European integration. The data reflects the debate regarding the European agenda for higher education and the tension regarding the preservation of national culture, e.g. the word 'Harmonisation' in agenda shows how policy documents try to reconcile this in the higher education sector. This tension between the national and the global/regional is also expressed in the intention of UCD's Strategic Plan 2005-8 which demonstrates how the university's ideals changed to develop a vision of the university within both a global and European context:

A university that is distinctively Irish, diverse, socially inclusive and recognised as world-class;

A university that continues to play a central role in the shaping of modern Ireland engages the global Irish community and offers an educational gateway to Europe for increasing numbers of international students;

(UCD, 2005a: 4)

5.7 Gate-keepers and Change-makers

In reviewing the policy process between UCD, the national organisations and supranational entities, there were key individuals at each level who operated within institutions or networks and aided the pollination of policy across institutional and national boundaries. Particular individuals in this study appear to

wield more influence than a particular policy network. Particularly, at institutional level, the Registrar and President were intrinsic to the conceptualisation and development of 'UCD Horizons'. Equally, the former Director of Academic Affairs was highlighted as a significant influence on the modular policy, and was able to draw on her past experience in Scotland during this policy process. Their initial pliable conception was then shaped by the institution, national and regional context at that time, as highlighted by the Registrar:

We did have a very clear vision of what we wanted to do. And it arose out of this complex background that it is impossible to try and change anything here. And it is a very restrictive, as opposed to a liberal education. The curriculum is set and you follow the curriculum and there is no capacity to do anything other than that. I suspect that even at a very deep level, we both found that quite frustrating, even as undergraduates, within the institution. We came back and said right, now this is going to change. That is the way leadership is. You do what you think is right. I would say those things...there wasn't an off the shelf model that you could take. We took in lots of experiences that we had ourselves, though oddly enough, not the ones people suspect we used. There were lots of resources available which said this has worked here, that has worked there (I.2).

Section 5.2.1 outlines the impact of the prior study in USA of members of the UCD's SMT in influencing UCD's policy. Particularly, the appointment of Dr Brady as President, having served at Harvard Medical School and then at the UCD Conway Institute of Biomedical and Biomolecular Research, contributed to the envisagement of UCD's future:

When I returned to Ireland from North America over a decade ago to take up an academic leadership position at UCD, I experienced not just a wave of nostalgia and pride in my alma mater but also a sense of excitement about the path ahead. The destinies of UCD and Ireland have always been intertwined. For over 150 years UCD and its graduates have played a central role in Ireland's advancement as a dynamic and successful independent European state. The University will have to be even more ambitious, creative and successful in the years ahead if Ireland is to continue to flourish as a progressive knowledge society (Brady, 2009).

While the role of agencies are influential in this case, particularly the BFUG, EUA and OECD, it is important to highlight that often certain individuals who are as influential on an informal basis, as the formal reports and reviews which these agencies prepare:

I think, just having read the questions, I have one overriding comment that the drivers behind strategic change are often deeper and more informal and sometimes even more personal than they would appear. The things that appear to be driving the change are secondary. That they are resources to, guides to the change. But when they come together and an external review recommends that you do 'X' and the incoming leadership of an organization with the vision say 'Yes; we should do X', then you are on a particular road (I.2)

A number of interviewees repeatedly highlighted the high level of connectivity between actors and agencies in European higher education. An OECD Project Officer observed that the higher education field is small and that a lot of the experts whom they drawn upon are also drawn upon by the Commission:

I won't say flat but the world is small and on higher education, we should be aware that the experts that we hire are also hired by the European Commission and other organizations (I.3).

In an Irish context, there appears to be a particularly, close, informal relationship between policy actors operating at national level. Respondents working at a national policy level appeared to be well acquainted:

We all communicate anyway. I mean Ireland is a very small place and we are all working together on a weekly basis anyway so it is more of a formality. We exchange information (I.16).

As highlighted in Section 5.4.1.2, the role of the IUA had altered in recent years to provide guidance to the universities on the Bologna Process partly through its role in brokering the university sector but also because their Director of Academic Affairs was 'so literate and connected in this field' (I.2). The Registrar of UCD

highlighted that in regard to the Bologna Process that this individual, not necessary the IUA, was hugely influential:

The best way for Ireland to put its best foot forward is to ask X [IUA Director of Academic Affairs] what are the other universities doing (I.2).

This individual was perceived to increase the policy capacity of the IUA as a policy support for UCD in the absence of other national policy supports. Henry *et al.* (2001) highlight the role of the global policy elite in the transfer of policy ideals. In this instance, a 'global policy elite' appears to operate at a regional or global level but with an 'anchor' in national and in some cases institutional policy contexts. In the example of the IUA Director of Academic Affairs, he had previously worked with the EUA prior to appointment with the IUA and was still involved with the preparation of the EUA Trends reports. It is the individual within the agency/network who can wield more influence than an agency/network itself.

Additionally, respondents highlighted the role of key individuals operating between different influential policy entities. By way of another example, a Policy Officer interviewed at the EC had worked on the project team for the 2003 Berlin Ministerial meeting. He had also worked for a number of years for the EUA and there he had been an author of a number of the 'Trends' Reports on the Bologna Process. Similar examples from the interviewees can be drawn using Appendix Thirteen which highlights the prior roles of interviewees. Particularly, the experience of those operating at a national or at a senior level in UCD demonstrates this point and highlights how a policy field might be constructed. As outlined in the methodology, those interviewed at a national level were selected using snowballing, i.e. where other interviewees highlighted the key agents in the policy process.

5.8 Conclusion

This chapter presents the findings from the documents and interview transcripts analysed. These findings imply a number of provisional key findings. Modularisation at UCD was introduced through internally generated major reform within the university, which commenced with the appointment of a new President in 2004. This offered UCD the opportunity to capitalise on its disciplinary diversity to reposition UCD within Irish higher education and introduce a unified university curricular framework. It also presented an opportunity for UCD to further compete internationally and to implement a number of the Bologna objectives ubiquitously. Modularisation was advocated by the recommendations of a number of reports completed by external agencies, most notably the EUA, the WAG and the OECD and built upon the experience of those central to the policy process, particularly, the President, Registrar and former Director of Academic Affairs. Based on the accounts above, modularisation was not just about the pedagogical development of university programmes or the arrangement of courses into ‘discrete modules’ but about fundamental modification to academic governance.

The ‘concurrent implementation’ of a new modular curriculum and academic structures, created different ‘opportunities and challenges’ for the university and its management (UCD, 2005c:1). The introduction of modularisation was associated with a more complex internal policy environment which was top-down, centrally driven and specifically associated with the appointment of a new Registrar. A new policy capacity was established centrally within the university and academic governance between the School and university were rescaled. This policy capacity demanded the central appointment of policy professionals and also the mobilisation of School staff to engage with policy reform. Despite a perceived strong identity within the university, interviewees at the UCD School of Business reported changes in governances, a more complex policy process, more

bureaucracy, less flexibility for students and decreased School autonomy.

In reviewing the policy rationale offered by UCD to underpin its modular reform, there is a notable absence of influence from Irish national agencies, DES and HEA. In this vacuum, UCD drew upon international agencies to inform its policy trajectory. In the absence of a strong national policy capacity, policies from the UK, USA and Canada were particularly influential. A number of the key policies acknowledged to underpin UCD's reform included the EUA 2005 Sectoral Review and the 2004 OECD Review of Higher Education which were commissioned by the state agencies in the absence of a national state policy field. The national policy field used these policies to underpin the establishment of a national agenda outlined by the Minister of Education and Science in April 2005. The Strategic Innovation Fund was established to incentivise reform for institutions, including the modularisation of their curriculum. However, UCD had already designed and prepared for implementation of its modular framework in 2005.

Despite an apparent vacuous state policy capacity encased by the DES and the HEA, UCD's modularisation led to the advancement of the institutional implementation of the Bologna Objectives. The Bologna Objectives were perceived to be of critical importance and in some cases so pervasive that it was assumed to have a legislative mandate. The Bologna Process appeared to be the epitome of a pluralist agenda, driven by the Ministers for Education in Europe, it engaged the DES staff, the representative members of the National Steering Group, those involved in Tuning and Bologna Promoters, but to mention a few, of the key stakeholders of it in the Irish context. The EC was also notably implicitly and explicitly involved in the setting and dissemination of the Bologna agenda. The Commission, though it was described as not being a 'significant player', had an influential role.

In reviewing the significant players in this policy process, institutionally and nationally, certain individuals were particularly significant in the inception of UCD's modular framework and its development. The experience of particular individuals influenced and exerted power over the conception of this framework and its policy construction. The suggestion to modularise appeared to emanate from external agencies, but the flavour of UCD's modularisation was the assembly of the experience of senior staff, the construction of the institution and the regional/global policy context.

Despite the absence of an explicit mandate for implementation and explicit national pressure, the Bologna objectives were implemented in UCD. As admitted by one interviewee, the UCD's Strategic Plan 2005-8 was 'not overtly aligned' with the Bologna Declaration but in practice, modularisation at UCD was 'very, very closely aligned' to it. This raises questions regarding the role of the external agencies, the state, university and individuals in the policy process and incurs inquiry into the impact of external agencies on governance in the state and university. In the next chapter, these initial observations are explored more thoroughly in light of the literature reviewed in Chapter 3.

CHAPTER SIX - DISCUSSION

6.0 Introduction

This chapter explores the findings of this research and discusses them within the context of the reviewed literature. It discusses the relations which exist within and between the findings outlined in Chapter 5, reviewing if they are consistent with current conceptions of the global policy process and its impact upon institutions. It outlines how supranational processes (including European integration and the work of the OECD) and policy making affected UCD's policy production.

It is important to examine this university's engagement with national and supranational discourses to establish the extent of policy mechanisms utilised to develop and implement this policy. It facilitates discussion of the policy effects on the changing relationship between the state and its universities, allowing for investigation of the extent of state engagement in supranational/international agencies and addressing how this affects the governance of higher education nationally and locally. This requires an understanding of the complexity of global/national/institutional policy processes and power's elusive nature. This chapter discusses these themes and draws upon Chapters 2 and 3 to allow for a methodical exploration of the global and regional policy process and its impact upon UCD. It investigates the relationship between the themes and provides a conceptual argument for decentred policy network analysis drawing upon a Bordieuan tradition. The chapter concludes by contemplating how the results address the research question. This chapter is divided into six key themes:

institutional context and internationalising policy; policy fields; the national policy field; the Bologna Process and the European policy field; policy mechanisms; and key agents: elites and change makers.

6.1. Institutional context and internationalising

The analysis of the globalisation phenomenon within local and national contexts demonstrate how the policy process is affected from a bottom-up and top-down perspective, responding to Neave's (2005) request to study the 'pays réel' of the Bologna Process. The study describes a transverse section of its complex interrelationship between different actors in the policy process by selecting a single policy, i.e. modularisation and tracing its origins and influences. It is relevant to review a phenomenon, like globalisation, at an institution such as UCD because of its association with nation-building. This study supports the observation of globalisation as transformalist (Held and McGrew, 2003), a tangible phenomenon, evidenced by amplified flows; of trade, people, capital, ideas and policy. The study demonstrates how education policy increasingly interconnects within and beyond states.

6.1.1. Internationalisation as a global discourse

This study verifies the embedding of internationalisation arising from a global discourse and the pursuit of the 'European Education Space', signifying trans-national changes to governance of national system policy actors (Lawn and Lingard, 2002; Lawn, 2006). The global and regional dimensions of this policy were drawn upon to legitimise change, using external agencies, e.g. the Washington Advisory Group, the OECD (through its national review), the Bologna Process and the EUA (through its institutional and sectoral reviews). These supranational organisations influenced policy by virtue of the global or regional level at which they operate. On occasion, the discourse is shaped by the ability of supranational

agencies to set the agenda, i.e. exercising the second dimension of power using Lukes' typology. For example as outlined, the Bologna Process framed the discussion substantially regarding the introduction of learning outcomes to UCD as part of its process of modularisation. In a UCD seminal policy document, learning outcomes were 'referred to extensively in the Bologna related documents, seminar reports and the Berlin Communiqué' (UCD, 2005d:2) and this reference, coupled with supporting references from CHEA and UK higher education agencies, appeared to provide the rationale for their introduction to UCD and framed subsequent policy goals. There also is substantial evidence of the third dimension of power and how the power of the EU and OECD shaped the discourse and policymakers' thinking at UCD at the time of modularisation. A phenomenological approach was critical here to exploration of this third dimension of power. Policy discussion of learning outcomes, for example, emanated directly from the Bologna Process and the BFUG in the first instance, not from national agencies. (See Section 5.6.2.1). This demonstrates the third dimension of power which concerns the ability of these organisations to control the 'rules of the game' and the processes through which power is defined and exercised.

Other global discourses were manifest too, e.g. in the 'UCD Strategic Plan 2005-8', including lifelong learning and international competition, as anticipated by Ozga and Lingard (2006). Evidence of a globalisation effect was manifest in UCD's pursuit of a modular policy in response to agendas external to the state, highlighting that such political structures shape not only national policy (Henry *et al.*, 2001) but also institutional policy. As a discourse, modularisation was associated with internationalisation and the tenets of New Public Management, including surveillance and the reduction of modules into uniform, compatible entities. Modularisation was accompanied with policies loosely related with NPM including restructuring, increased managerialism and performativity.

6.1.2 Reference Societies and Institutions

National initiatives to modularise the university curriculum post-dated UCD's developments and did not appear to be a source of reference. The policy of modularisation originated from the UK, USA and particularly the EUA. Thus, modularisation can be classed as a 'travelling policy' (Alexiadou and Jones, 2001) which coalesced with existent embedded UCD policies. 'Travelling policies' often are correlated with supranational agencies. Here, the OECD and Bologna Process appeared to be connected with broader, loftier policy objectives including internationalisation. Modularisation is narrower in scope and was propagated by professional associations (i.e. the EUA and WAG) and influenced the policy experiences of the UK and North America. Ultimately, the institutional decision to modularise the curriculum resided with the President and Registrar and influenced by their personal experiences, they formulated UCD's 'flavour' of modularisation. It highlights the situated agency of senior university policy makers with the traditions of the institution. (See Section 6.6).

This research confirms the perception of senior policy-makers at UCD of the USA, Canada and UK as progressive countries, regarding higher education internationalisation (Stensaker *et al.*, 2008). These countries were framed as progressive by senior policy-makers at UCD, demonstrating Lukes' third dimension of power as these countries were presented as influencing, shaping and determining policy at UCD, by those involved in the policy process. Following on from the example regarding the introduction of learning outcomes, policy was cited and used to support the rationale for UCD's initiatives from the UK (including SEEC and NUCCAT Credit and Qualifications) and the USA (e.g. CHEA). These countries were used to provide a rationale for what UCD's policymakers decided to do. UCD's internationalisation agenda was strongly associated with political and economic reasons manifest in 'new forms' of internationalisation (Stensaker *et al.*,

2008:4). At the implementation stage, the use of external institutions informed UCD's policy by way of 'reference institutions'. Steiner-Khamsi (2004) discussed 'reference societies' to highlight the use of policy from more developed countries by nations with less policy capacity. In this study, there was evidence of 'reference institutions' from outside of the nation-state which legitimated desired policy trajectories. Policy was 'borrowed' from overseas universities, perceived as comparators to UCD. Some Irish universities had modularised but did not influence UCD, due to the competitive context at the time. (See Section 5.6.7.1).

6.1.3 Modularisation: Vernacular Globalisation

The parameters for policy discourse and the fashion of its discussion, assuming cultural norms, historical path dependencies and interest-based behaviours affect policy-making (Schmidt and Radaelli, 2004). This study evidences that UCD's past and its institutional persona exploited modularisation, as a source of competitive advantage, given the institution's size and unique breadth of disciplines. The disciplinary diversity and institutional tradition influenced the policy borrowed from reference institutions to create UCD's 'flavour' of modularisation underpinned by the SMT's experience of teaching at UCD and the concept of broad liberal, undergraduate education from the North American and Newman traditions. Modularisation concurrently facilitated implementation of a number of 'Bologna' objectives, including semesterisation and ECTS implementation. Ozga and Lingard (2006:73) suggested that the embedding of education within a national culture needs to be reviewed to conceptualise how the 'vernacular' replies to the 'global'. UCD's institutional culture, tradition and the agenda of senior individuals also need to be considered. This agenda and the presence of global discourses highlight how the state and its machinery might be reconstituted by forces outside its border (Rizvi, 2006). Bourdieu's 'conceptual triad' illuminates this reconstitution.

6.2 Policy Fields

Lingard *et al.* (2005) suggested that many (e.g. Beck, 2000) demonstrate the inherent national space of much social theory and an associated 'methodological nationalism', in terms of the nature both of theory and research methodology. They suggested Bourdieu's theoretical and methodological dispositions combined permit a means to progress beyond spatial and national constraints and to understand the complex global social relations arising from a process of globalisation. The findings of this thesis recognise national, European and global policy fields. There was a strong institutional policy field existing centrally and within the School of Business. The habitus of the institution, as the largest national university, historically involved in the construction of the nation (see Section 2.5), and a strong School identity both determined the development and implementation of policy at the time of modularisation .

Evidence of the global policy field is illustrated at UCD through the presence of the OECD. Other global entities, e.g. UNSECO or the World Bank, were not evident, though it is acknowledged that they do engage with the EU. While entities like the OECD are considered a 'global field', it is noted that this field is more likely to be a 'supranational field' constituted by the members of other developed nations, rather than a purely representative global instrument. Regardless, a regional field was evidenced, through the involvement of the EUA and the Bologna Process. The self-construction of the policy context by UCD is interesting and highlights the lack of a robust state national policy education field. National agencies, e.g. the HEA and DES, were not particularly influential suggesting the absence of a strong national state field. Agencies, predominantly the IUA, played a strong informal policy role through personal networks in the national field to guide UCD where requested, highlighting the intervention of civil society in the absence of a more sophisticated state field. This informal non-state support assisted the absence of state filtering of

global effects, associated with the 'disembedding hypothesis' where universities disembed themselves from their national context (Marginson and van der Wende, 2006:22). UCD's agenda venerates the 'international' dimension and in the dearth of an interventionist state policy context, the university began to disembed itself from its national context, e.g. through its increasing engagement with global agencies and networks and a more internationalised staff and student population. For example, UCD's non-EU international student population rose by 10% during the academic years 2007-8 and 2008-9 (UCD, 2009:18). Exchange students, generally from within the EU, increased 21% during this same period (UCD, 2009:18).

6.2.1 Institutional Capital

Rizvi and Lingard (2010) suggested that the Global South is positioned differently from the Global North regarding the effects of education policy from other international agencies. This thesis shows that nations have different positions even within the Global North, e.g. Ireland occupies a different space as a smaller, post-colonial nation, than the UK or USA. Schmidt and Radaelli (2004) highlighted that discourse reconciles influencing factors including, the social and political norms, the extent of fragmented or decentralised institutional coordination, the political governance structure (if it is pluralist, corporatist or statist and its process the governance processes) in different settings. Henry *et al.* (2001) observed that OECD has more salience in some countries than others. Similarly, Lingard and Lawn (2001) highlighted the 'European educational policy space' was most pervasive in the least powerful, least developed EU Mediterranean countries. Both agencies heavily influenced this university's agenda differently. The implementation of the Bologna Objectives was perceived as necessary for the institution, whereas the OECD national review set a national agenda which was desirable for UCD.

Bourdieu's tools are increasingly utilised in education policy (Hardy and Lingard,

2008; Rawolle and Lingard, 2008; Rawolle, 2005). Lingard *et al.* (2005) argued that the quantity of 'national capital' retained by a nation is a determining factor in the resistance to the global field. This study highlights that the state did not resist, but passively engaged, with external agencies, inviting them to conduct reviews which premised national and institutional policy development. These external agencies affected UCD to the extent that there was scope to negotiate an institutional response, predicated upon the habitus of UCD as an institution and individual staff members, to these international organisations, e.g. OECD and Bologna. It implies there was a way for UCD to respect the role of these institutions without accepting their entire ideological agenda. It implies that the agenda is not entirely defined by these institutions, but also by UCD's institutional capital.

To date, the concept of institutional capital has not been proposed in the literature. This case demonstrates how an institution with a strong historical background, a SMT with capacity for situated agency and relative autonomy from the state engaged directly with the global and European policy fields, responded in the absence of a strong national policy field. Institutional capital describes the capital retained by UCD contributing to its actions; including its resistance and advances in policy development.

6.2.2 Reconstituting Fields

If the argument of the constituted global policy field is sustained (Lingard *et al.*, 2005) (and it appears it is), this research proposes a consequent reconstitution of the local education policy field. Taylor *et al.* (1997) suggest policy as both process and product. Modularisation was the first widespread academic process, connecting academic and professional staff across all the disciplinary boundaries and levels of the university, recalibrating governance structures. This study suggests that despite its centrally coordinated, top-down approach, individual academics retained some

autonomy resonating with the observations of Veiga and Amaral (2006). This reform instigated ubiquitous staff engagement with the modularisation process, the Bologna Process and the policy professionals recruited to centrally develop academic policy at the time of modularisation.

There was also a reconstitution at institutional level of policy capacity, as a modular framework was constructed. Traditionally, power and authority in universities are dispersed (Birnbaum, 1991; Clark, 1991) but strategic changes at this institution, including its modular framework and associated policies, facilitated the redirection of power centrally. Prior to modularisation, the policy process was fragmented with power diffused through different Faculties and without a centralised policy core, facilitating a bottom-up approach to policy development by programmes and individual faculties. As the modular framework became more sophisticated, policy became increasingly centralised and driven from the top-down. Specific policy units and expertise were developed in order to formulate the modular framework post-2005, establishing a 'third space professional'. Modularisation concurrently occurred with new academic structures, resulting in alterations to academic governance. For the modular framework to be implemented a new academic governance structure was required which coincided with the wider organisational restructuring. It appeared that governance for more routine policy areas was awarded to the School, with more strategic policy areas becoming the responsibility of the 'Centre'. Table 6.1 demonstrates these changes and the recalibration of power between 'Centre' and 'School':

Table 6.1 Governance Before and After Modularisation

Policy Activity	Before Modularisation	After Modularisation
Responsibility for Policy Production	At Faculty level in consultation with the Registrars Office	Centrally New programme development reviewed in conjunction with School and UUPB.
Policy Professionals supporting policy centrally in the university	Ad hoc between Faculty and 'Centre'	Policy Officers appointed centrally. Academic and Policy Development Unit' established. College and School Teaching and Learning Committee Vice-Principals for Teaching and Learning in each college appointed.
Uniformity of Programme Structure	Fragmented & varied per programme	Generally uniform; some opportunity for derogations
Involvement of Academic Staff	All academic staff	Restricted to Programme Board members and election to other university committees
Regulatory Framework	Marks and Standards for each academic programme	Single University Regulations with limited derogations
School Governance	Through a Faculty Standing Committee, a Faculty meeting and then ACEC	More centrally focused with devolution of responsibility for issues, e.g. admissions; leave of absence, etc. through a Programme Board. More the responsibility of Undergraduate/ Postgraduate University Programme Boards and ACEC. Reconstituted, less powerful School Executive reformed.
Programmes consistent with Bologna objectives and ECTS	Ad hoc across programmes and Faculties.	Yes
Locus of Policy Initiation	At a Faculty or Programmatic level in response to Faculty or external stimuli	At a central level in response generally to university and external stimuli. Occasional School consultation where requested.

The 'harmonisation' of module offerings brought about convergence of policy and practice (McNeeley and Yun-Kyung, 1994; Rizvi and Lingard, 2010). The process of modularisation activated compliance across the university's programmes, enshrining ECTS and semesterisation across the institution. This framework inculcated consistency across the university to ensure transfer across programmes but also the potential for module transfer at a national and international level. While it is argued that 'travelling policies' coalesce and interject with existing policies due to the previously fragmented nature of the policy process within the institution, a 'vernacular globalisation' appeared in two phases: first in the university's model of modularisation; and second when modularisation encountered existing programmes. Particularly, the introduction of modularisation to non-traditional programmes was complex and exemplified the disjuncture between the global and the local; between the 'context-generative' practices and the 'context-productive' (Appadurai, 1996).

Often the term vernacular globalisation is utilised to insinuate the national adaption of a global policy in a top down fashion and might be used to label UCD's experience. However here, modularisation is the domestication of a global policy by an institution in a bottom-up fashion. This occurred in a national context where the state was not a dominant actor. This current utilisation of the term vernacular globalisation does not capture this dimension as it often refers to the nation state's adaptation of a global fashion, not an institution's. A university appears to be a unique entity in the Irish education field context, as apart from universities, very few institutions have the necessary autonomy and resources to initiate and implement 'vernacularisation' of policy. On this occasion, the conceptual device 'global vernacularisation' is a more appropriate description to highlight the influence of a global process at the level of the institution and within certain parts of the institution. UCD adopted the policy of modularisation and instituted it into the organisation, in response to an internally generated reform agenda.

6.3 National Policy field

Vernacularised education policy, as described by Ozga and Lingard (2006), suggests a divergence thesis where international policies are mediated by the nation to provide a unique policy and presumes evidence of a strong national field. Rawolle and Lingard (2008) suggested that the global policy field is a physical metaphor related to global relations. They argued that nation states develop mechanisms in relation to the process of globalisation by engaging with the developing logic of the education field. Both presuppose the national field as the primary point of response, rather than the institution. This case demonstrates how a weak national state policy field existed during a strong institutional response due to institutional capital. This highlights that institutional policy and national policy have not kept pace with each other. UCD attempted to identify itself outside of the national policy structures, using the recommendations from international/supranational agencies to underpin a competitive institutional strategy.

Rawolle and Lingard (2008) suggested that in a post-Westphalian state of global politics, global policy fields emerge which instigate a response from the nation state. In this study, the state itself reacted to the competitive global higher education market by seeking a policy agenda from external agencies operating at European and global level. Ireland experienced the lack of a policy capacity for multiple reasons which are discussed below. Often the state's role (i.e. through the DES and HEA) was taken for granted by actors. While the state field may appear of little influence, as discussed, the state funds universities in Ireland and could theoretically have the power to stop funding UCD. (See Section 2.4). This highlights an implicit power using Hearn's (2008) conception of power. Indeed, it emphasises that power which is not exercised by an agent can stop being a power if not employed, thus becoming more of a shaping ideology. Consequently, the national

state field operated more through the consciousness of individual actors or the policy networks they engaged with. It might be a fairer assessment to suggest that the state's role in the policy process is nuanced and by paying attention to the 'global vernacularisation' of this institution, consideration is also given to the symbolic entities of the nation, which includes the state.

In returning to the explanation of the lack of policy capacity within the national state field, three rationales are offered for this. First the policy role of the Irish state in higher education is less evident as teaching and learning are areas of institutional responsibility. Because of the Universities Act 1997, the university field in Ireland has relative political autonomy from the state, notwithstanding state funding of Irish universities. UCD's production of policy involved little explicit state influence, suggesting that policy passed from the global or international to the institution with little intervention by state machinery. This university autonomy creates a contradictory role for the HEA. Policy development is a recent addition to the HEA's brief and is slowly developing in the shadow of university academic autonomy. The current policy vacuum was increasingly filled by the IUA, creating a blurring of agendas between the IUA and HEA and highlighted the absence of a clear defined role for key agents in Irish higher education.

Second, the lack of policy capacity is correlated to the habitus of Ireland, as a small peripheral country which traditionally was intrinsically influenced by the production of policy by external influences, including reference societies and external agencies. While the state was not an active policy partner, it did request national and sectoral reviews from the OECD and EUA. This avoids direct conflict between university autonomy and the state, negating the need for a sophisticated state policy capacity. The use of external agencies' recommendations coupled with financial incentivisation was more conducive to the self-management of Irish universities. Evidently, this approach does not nurture national policy expertise.

Third, the national policy field had little capacity within the state, as politically, higher education was of less immediate political importance due to the heavy state role in the administration of primary and second level education. Third level education was seen as of less political importance than other education sectors and was accordingly less resourced to formulate policy. This coupled with the universities' statutory autonomy and a national disposition to look externally for policy developments, contributed to a delicate national higher education policy field.

6.4 European Policy Field

Despite this delicate national field, the desired institutional and national policy reforms, including the implementation of the Bologna Objectives and a modular framework were attained without heavy state involvement. Both state agencies were careful to outline that the respective universities were responsible for the development of academic policy and involvement with the Bologna Process, despite ad hoc political pressure on the university to implement Bologna objectives from the DES. Notwithstanding state involvement through the Interministerial Conferences and the HEA's role, the Bologna Process influenced policy through a complex criss-crossing of soft governance tools, instigated through parallel processes at local, national and European levels. It demonstrates how the European Project, through a diffuse myriad of governance tools exerts the ability to control the 'rules of the game', through less overt processes, demonstrating the third dimension of power (Lukes, 2005). It also supports Hearn's (2008) observation that domination in terms of Lukes' conception of power does not necessary have a malign effect: in this instance UCD appears to have mostly benefited from engagement in the Bologna Process to date.

As highlighted, universities are of particular interest in investigating the process of globalisation, as since the middle ages universities have been attached to a universalist ideology that knowledge transcends national cultural boundaries. They have not always been located within the national policy field. Universities also represent a project of the nation state (Enders, 2004; Kwiek, 2000; Scott and Good, 2004) and are recognised as part of the project of building 'Europe' (Commission on the European Communities, 2006). In steering this agenda, there is evidence of governance without government (Rosenau, 1992), demonstrated through formal and informal networking particularly. More formal networks were manifest at a national level, e.g. NSG, IUA and EUA. Through the involvement of key institutional agents, particularly the Registrar's interaction with these national bodies, e.g. IUA NQAI, and EUA, policy infiltrated UCD. Particularly, the IUA increasingly played a formal and informal role in policy diffusion, in the absence of a stronger HEA and due to staff, e.g. the Director of Academic Affairs, with the European policy field.

This study evidences policy activity in the European education policy field constituted of agencies, including the EUA, ESU, European Commission and the members of the Bologna Process (through the BFUG). Five of the six Bologna objectives were premised on the European Commission's Erasmus programme. The ensuing Bologna Process built upon these objectives using member states, via the Interministerial Conferences, to drive the process through 'comitology' (Dale and Robertson, 2002). This top down approach coupled with a bottom-up approach, e.g. particularly through the UCD Registrar's Office engagement with influential agents including IUA, EUA and the Tuning process, facilitated policy harmonisation at UCD. The policy context created by these agencies' activities demonstrated a variant of the OMC. While the OMC is strictly speaking a Commission initiative, there is strong evidence of a similar approach taken by the Bologna Process, in terms of the profusion of benchmarking, networking and peer monitoring

instruments. These tools created an influential policy context to which the state and university responded with the desire to 'be seen' to be making progress. The specific mechanisms of policy transfer, as highlighted by respondents contributing to this study, are now reviewed.

6.5 Policy Mechanisms

Dale's (1999) typology specified the globalisation effects on national policies and suggested a number of identifiable mechanisms, though it did not particularly document the policy process and the relationships between the different levels of policy field. In reviewing the mechanisms of external effects on national policies, aspects of the mechanisms of borrowing, learning, harmonisation, dissemination, standardisation and installing interdependence were evident to varying degrees. Policy dissemination and interdependence installation were more visible at a national level. These mechanisms appeared also at an institutional level. Of notable absence was the mechanism of imposition. While Dale's heuristic is primarily in regard to national policy contexts, the end product of modularisation demonstrated the most prolific effects of policy borrowing, learning, harmonisation and standardisation at an institutional level, which were largely instigated by the university in response to its internally generated agenda and also the regional policy field. Imposition in this case safeguarded the autonomy of universities to develop academic policy and is reflected in the ad hoc use of softer mechanisms of policy transfer by the institution. Though Dale's typology accounts for some of the institutional and national policy mechanisms of globalisation, it does not assist in reviewing agency within the policy process or the related issue of governance. The mechanisms which Dale outlines are highlighted as formal and organised. They do not take into account the more informal conduits of the process of globalisation which affect the policy process.

6.5.1 Policy networks

In drawing on Lukes' conceptualisation of power, Bourdieu's conceptual triad helps to unlock the black box of power and to demonstrate how invisible power is exerted particularly using the concepts of field and habitus. Equally, while Bourdieu's conceptual triad helps make sense of power relations, it does not assist in reviewing agency in the context of governance. Bourdieu's concepts are nebulous and do not explain the constructions through which power is mediated. While some espoused the formation of the global policy field (Lingard *et al.*, 2005), the use of Bourdieu's concepts of field and particularly habitus can convey an erroneous determinism (Jenkins, 1992) and neglect the role of key individuals in shaping the policy process. The introduction of modularisation to UCD demonstrates that individuals, e.g. the Registrar and those at School level, still wield some 'willful power' in the production of policy (Ritzer and Goodman, 2003:534), despite the power of the global educational policy field. This case study acknowledges that individuals exert power and influence over the policy process, reminding us against over-determinism.

Policy networks provide a heuristic tool to analyse governance and autonomy from state machinery (Rhodes, 1997a). Lukes' three dimensions of power are useful to make sense of the more invisible, third dimension of power, providing insight into an individual's role in the construction of education policy and capturing the diffuse nature of power, incorporated into the international and global dimensions of governance. This study highlights that policy networks appear more frequently at a European, rather than national level. Thorhallsson (2000; 2006) suggested that smaller states act differently at an EU level due to their corporatist structure. In this instance, a small nation with a weak capacity for higher education policy facilitated informal networks between national agents, e.g. NSG and IHEQN. There were some networks evident at a national level but few engaged directly with UCD. (See

Appendix One). Generally, UCD was represented by the IUA at these networks. Corporatism may contribute to the deficiency of a more sophisticated policy network structure as suggested by Rhodes. The theory of policy networks also suggests the hollowing-out of the state (Rhodes, 1997a) but here the weak national policy field negated the need for strong networks to lobby for policy reform. It is difficult to surmise if there was ever more than a hollow state capacity for Irish higher education policy, particularly regarding teaching and learning. Nonetheless, a small number of policy networks are observable in this largely non-resource dependent environment. Based upon the institutional autonomy, the policy networks engaged with UCD were not particularly formalised.

This concept of policy network provides a framework for discussion but is challenged by the nature the Bologna Process. The bottom-up and top-down nature of this process is so ubiquitous that it challenges the theory of policy networks. While policy networks operate vertically and horizontally on issues, so too do the individuals operating within these networks. It presupposes identifiable distinctions between particular 'spaces' and does not account for the multiple, concurrent agendas pursued by an agent, e.g. local/national/global and internal/external. Because of the nature of the Bologna Processes, categorisation of agents singularly into these spaces is not easy, as some key individuals hold multiple roles and pursue several agendas. The literature reviewed on policy networks also highlights the diversity within the concept and the absence of an essentialist account of networks. Bevir and Richards (2009a&b) suggested accounts only offer the narrative of network observers and members, providing insights into the local governance, national and intergovernmental levels and a different ways of addressing complex issues. They suggested that a decentred study of networks, demonstrating how various actors confine what others do can weaken the intentions of others. The concepts of situated agency and tradition from decentred network theory are similar concepts to Bourdieu's concepts of agency and habitus.

These concepts support a decentred approach and can explain the constitution of the policy fields and the fluid relationship between the different agents. Using Bourdieu's conceptual triad strengthens the current thinking on policy networks.

6.6 Key Agents: Elites & Change-makers

While policy networks are a useful concept, in this case it was key individuals within policy networks who predominantly influenced the policy process. A decentred approach allows for a conceptual understanding of the role of individuals in the policy process. It highlights the benefit to policy sociology of drawing on a political science approach to examine such phenomena. By understanding the situated agency of the individuals within a particular context, an understanding of the emergent policy is possible. The 'Everyday Maker' exemplified situated agency using a bottom-up approach, outlining the role of the individual with the ability to execute different roles in response to different policy communities and produce concrete outcomes as political activity shifts from the formal to the informal (Bang and Sørensen, 1999). This study finds evidence of this 'Everyday Maker', who moves between the executive level in the institution and the national, as in the case of UCD's Registrar. At institutional level more informal networking is utilised in and outside of university committees and structures. With weak state institutions, and relatively powerless, external institutions with no direct mandate in education policy, networks are informal and dispersed. Thus, it is not only the network which has the power to shape the policy process, but the individual.

Thus, there are two mutually reinforcing concepts relevant to understanding the role of the individual agent in the policy process. First, a decentred approach sees the network as the product of individuals acting on their beliefs and the stories they tell one another (Bevir and Richards, 2009b) and/or the affect of their habitus/tradition. The Everyday Maker's habitus to operate in different policy fields

during their concurrent reconstitution is important and absent from other studies of policy networks and education studies using Bourdieu's concepts. Bourdieu's work predominantly drew upon the experience of the French state and this may account for the absence of reference to civil society and political entities outside the state machinery. The 'Everyday Maker' is involved in moving from formal networked policy groups and implementing policy in a particular institution. A second relevant concept is Henry *et al.*'s (2001) global policy community, influenced by the political structures working beyond nations who facilitate the emergence of an education policy community across the political elites of international agencies (e.g. OECD) and national education systems (Taylor *et al.*, 1997). There was evidence of policy elites moving from one agency to another (see Chapter 5.8). Indeed often the Everyday Maker becomes part of this global policy community based on their previous experience and affected habitus.

Both the concepts of the 'Everyday Maker' and the 'Global Policy Community' explain the influence of key individuals in the policy process but neither fully capture the omnipresent aspect of the pervasive Bologna Process. In an attempt to highlight these roles and the wider engagement required of this policy process, the concept of 'policy pollinator' is proposed here to capture the fluid trajectory of policy dissemination of policy ideas and concepts by other individuals in multiple education policy fields through seminars, conferences, policy networks, academic publications, events, etc., and informal dissemination local, national, international and/or global levels. This concept of the policy pollinator highlights the importance of individuals who operate within policy networks and more frequently outside of them to diffuse a policy through more informal mechanisms, consciously and unconsciously contributing to the increasingly encompassing context of the European Higher Education Area in Ireland.

CHAPTER SEVEN - CONCLUSION

7.0 Introduction

This research investigated how supranational processes (including European integration and the work of the OECD) and policy making affected UCD's policy production as it implemented a policy of modularisation. The study was phenomenological in approach, drawing on those who had experienced the implementation of modularisation and the policy process surrounding this. It involved a hermeneutical approach which reviewed how particular policies contributed to the maintenance or development of this policy process. This chapter summarises the major findings of this thesis and considers how this study contributes to existing knowledge on this topic theoretically, methodologically and empirically. From a theoretical perspective, insights are offered into the current debates on rescaled governance relationships in higher education. While no new methods were utilised, comments on the research tools employed to examine the policy process are outlined. Empirically, this study provides insights into the process and impact of European harmonisation of higher education in the Republic of Ireland. Finally, some of the study's limitations are acknowledged and future areas of research proposed.

7.1 Summary of key findings

Chapter Six discussed the selected findings of this research within the current literature. This case demonstrates the embedding of a policy of internationalisation

arising from a global discourse and the pursuit of the 'European Education Space', demonstrating trans-national changes in governance of national system policy actors. The study evidences the effects of globalisation manifest in UCD's modular policy which responded to internally generated reform and agencies external to the state. The pursuit and implementation of this policy demonstrates the capacity of non-national political structures, e.g. the EUA, OECD and Bologna Process, to shape not only national policy (Henry *et al.*, 2001) but also institutional policy. The manifestation of these structures also provides confirmation of governance without government. However, external influences on the policy processes were not confined to these policy agencies, as a number of overseas universities also were leveraged throughout the policy process. This provided verification of not only 'reference societies' (Steiner-Khamsi, 2004) but 'reference institutions' from outside of the nation state to legitimate the desired policy trajectories. State machinery, including the HEA and DES, were not particularly influential on UCD's policy process in this instance.

The study finds that the supranational policy process had a visible influence on institutional policy making. This study sustains the suggestion of a global policy field (Lingard *et al.*, 2005). It also highlights that as a result of it, the local education policy field was reconstituted. UCD's policy capacity and at least one of its schools was reconstituted as the university responded to internal and external policy agendas. In reviewing the different policy spaces or 'policy fields', Bourdieu's conceptual triad provides a useful set of tools to investigate the complex dimensions of power suggested by Lukes (2005). The use of Bourdieu's concepts of field and particularly habitus, convey a sense of determinism, overlooking the role of key individuals. The introduction of modularisation to UCD demonstrates that the agency of individuals, still wield some 'willful power' in policy production (Ritzer and Goodman, 2003:534), despite the global educational policy field's influence.

7.2 Contribution to knowledge

The theoretical, methodological and empirical contributions of this research to the current body of knowledge are now discussed.

7.2.1 Theoretical Contribution

This research provides an original contribution to understanding the affects of a process of globalisation on institutional policy making. This is relevant to the education and policy sociology literature. This study highlights the fluid nature of policy making, involving diffuse actors from within and outside of the nation-state and demonstrating the Irish nation-state's increasingly nuanced role. The involvement of agents external to the state evidences a global policy field in the area of higher education policy, sustaining Lingard's thesis (2000). The state's machinery was relatively benign in the policy process, as evidenced by the independence of UCD from the HEA and DES on matters of teaching and learning policy. This study highlights the reconstitution of the local policy field and rescaled institutional governance, resulting from engagement with the global and regional higher education policy fields. It provides empirical evidence that Irish higher education is not primarily shaped by the nation state, as suggested by de Wit (2002) and Enders (2004). UCD had a significant amount of institutional capital and autonomy to determine its own policy trajectory, particularly within the Bologna Process. For example, 'Horizons' was unique to UCD and leveraged its key strengths, including its size and disciplinary breadth. However, it also was constructed as compatible with the Bologna objectives, particularly in its utilisation of the ECTS and learning outcomes.

This thesis demonstrates that as this university engaged with dominant global discourses, specifically internationalisation, they had a tangible effect on UCD's policy process. Modularisation, as a policy originating outside of the state, was

endorsed by a number of external agencies and was perceived to attend to a number of national and institutional policy agendas, including internationalisation. In response to modularisation and a number of associated reforms, academic governance was rescaled at UCD. As discussed, a reconstitution of the local policy field was instituted, as UCD engaged with the global policy field and the institutional policy process became increasingly professionalised. Thus, the policy of modularisation was not only about pedagogical programmatic developments but changes in academic governance (see Table 6.1). Researching the local policy process provided empirical evidence of the policy relationship between the university and national, regional and global policy agents, revealing a complex policy process predicated upon an intricate web of influences from within and outside the state. This transverse sectional approach highlights the university's autonomy from the state, especially regarding teaching and learning policy, and emphasises the absence of explicit state involvement from this publicly funded institution. This autonomy from the educational national state field occurred for a number of likely reasons: primarily the statutory independence of Irish universities and UCD's institutional habitus.

The state engaged with external policy entities, including the EUA, the Bologna Process and OECD, to inform the national policy agenda. However, these agencies appeared to influence UCD's policy trajectory through direct dealings, demonstrating a trans-national change to policy governance. The changes evident in tertiary level policy making are symptomatic of a replacement of government with 'interdependence, a segmented executive, governance' and 'intergovernmental relations' (Rhodes 1997a:7). Particularly, the IUA's and EUA's influence on UCD regarding the Bologna Process highlights this. The composition of the Bologna Process itself demonstrates an intricate mesh of intergovernmental relations. However, in the absence of a strong state policy capacity, the IUA increasingly informed UCD regarding the Bologna Process, demonstrating the increasing role of

civil society and key individuals in higher education policy. This study demonstrates that Appadurai's (1996) term 'vernacular globalisation' does not sufficiently reflect UCD's experience, as it tends to refer to the state's adaption of a global policy (see Ozga and Lingard, 2006). Consequently, the term 'global vernacularisation' captures how an institution adapts a policy originating outside of the nation. This underlines the need to reconceptualise the effects of globalisation from a micro-level to highlight the effect of the global and European fields on the local policy process.

Drawing on the political science literature adds an additional explanatory dimension to this policy sociology study. To investigate the power and governance, Lukes' three dimensions of power were employed. Lukes (2005) provided a working account of how to empirically inspect the third dimension of power and a liberal approach was adopted to investigate this, drawing on Bourdieu's tools of habitus, field and capital. Drawing on Bourdieu's and Lukes' concepts cooperatively adds value to a bottom-up empirical exploration, providing a means to explore the complex, invisible, nature of power. While the concept of habitus is useful in reviewing the production of this policy, the concept can be construed as rigid, determinism (Jenkins, 1992), neglecting the influence individuals retain. This study demonstrates how individuals have the power to exercise agency and influence the policy process, regardless of circumstances. This is exemplified at two levels: locally, as members of the School of Business lobbied for derogations for individual programmes and also at an institutional level where the Registrar and President drew explicitly upon their individual habitus to instigate 'UCD Horizons'. Individuals often work to attain multiple agendas, which are not always visible in the policy process, e.g. UCD's Registrar's pursuit of institutional, personal and national agendas.

While soft governance tools, including policy networks, influenced UCD's policy process, key individuals within it had a disproportionate role in shaping modularisation. A decentred approach to policy networks is premised on the concepts of situated agency and tradition, which resonate with habitus and agency suggesting an opportunity for Bourdieu's concepts to elucidate decentred policy network debates. This study supports the call for a decentred study of networks, which shifts the focus from the institutional to the individual, instigating a re-adjustment of the social construction of policy networks through the ability of individuals to create meaning (Bevir and Richards, 2009 a&b). Such an account draws upon both situated agency and tradition, and is recognised as analogous concepts to Bourdieu's tools of habitus, field and capital. Reviewing these concepts with the decentred policy network tools of traditions and the situated agency of key individuals allows for a less deterministic investigation through a Bourdieuan lens. Utilising Bourdieu's tools with Luke's third dimension of power explains the influence of individual actors in the policy process. Bourdieu's theory allows review of complex interactions between disparate policy actors from different loci and enables their discussion with analogous studies elsewhere. Without the tools of Bourdieu's conceptual triad, it is difficult to approach such comparisons into complex policy processes. They demonstrate how power can be conceptualised as invisible and encoded in everyday practices beyond our consciousness, providing for empirical investigation of the construction of global education policy. While these concepts remain undeniably nebulous, they were for the purposes of this study, a key tool in researching the highly complex, nature of power. Bourdieu's concepts provide an uncontested construction to organise key themes arising from complex policy processes and the unwritten agreements between its agents. The indefinable character of these tools is vindicated, when empirically applied.

Bourdieu (1999:220) also suggested gravitating beyond 'methodological nationalism'. Rawolle and Lingard (2008) proposed that rejecting methodological

nationalism is central to education policy research given the rescaled 'policyscapes' of globalisation. To understand these developments, it is necessary to empirically investigate policies within their context. Decontextualising studies may reflect the state's changing role but researchers should not entirely reject the state as the organising principle of modernity. To understand new scalar politics, we need to understand the nation-state, past and present, as a shaping influence. To reject methodological nationalism entirely is to suggest the monopolisation of global influences of national and local policy contexts, providing a glorified account of the phenomenon of globalisation. Thus, the term 'methodological nationalism' appears to confuse 'nationalism' with 'national identity' or 'national location'. As no policy study occurs in a vacuum, this is not possible and as a result, it appears that this term requires further conceptual debate.

To date some of the literature regarding the effects of globalising the policy process (e.g. Dale, 1999; Rizvi and Lingard, 2010) lack a comprehensive empirical basis. (See Section 3.2). This study is grounded by the data collected. Some commentators do not sufficiently differentiate between the domains of global, European and regional discourses (Ball, 1998), though there are ideological similarities between them, e.g. increased mobility of academics and students or an interest in governance changes. Not differentiating between these interrelated ideologies and policies reinforces globalisation as a neutral technical term and limits understanding of local, national, regional, European and Global relationships. While this study has not analysed these discourses as 'discourses', it traced links between them and their points of intersection, e.g. EUA and OECD directly influencing Irish discourse in the Irish Minister of Education and Science's 2005 speech. It demonstrates how these discourses leach between the institutional, national, regional and global contexts.

7.2.2 Methodological Comments

As outlined in Chapter 4, this research was designed to offer a tentative understanding of power dynamics between institutions, supranational agencies and the nation state. Originally, a social network analysis (as per Scott [2000]) was intended, but due to the omnipresent nature of the Bologna Process, it was not possible to quantify the actors involved. Instead a qualitative study, which focused on the roles of key agents in the policy process, was completed. Data were collected using textual analysis of key policy documents and semi-structured interviews with 24 individuals in Dublin, Brussels and Paris involved in the policy process. The methodological design of this study was not novel: it drew on a number of standard methods utilised in elite interviewing and textual analysis (e.g. McEvoy, 2006). However, a number of insights were gained which warrant discussion. It required the selection of participants who would reveal the different relationships between the various policy entities and shed light on UCD's national, regional and global contexts. Interviewees were selected based on insider knowledge of the institution and the 'snowballing' technique outlined in Chapter 4.

7.2.2.1 Interviewing Policy Elites

Interviewing elites is not original but a number of observations were made which add to the understanding of this process. The selection of policy elites, as the main source of information for this study, was an added complexity to the process of interviewing. The power relations during such interviews are heightened due to their status. Furthermore, in all cases, there was a major age differential between interviewer and interviewee. Due to the status of interviewees, the interviews often became more of an informed discussion than a formal interview. Interviewing these candidates required much preparation and paradoxically, the more preparation completed, the more it became possible to have an informal discussion. Preparation also ensured that the interview agenda was not diverted by the interviewees.

The most difficult interview to secure was with a UCD senior policy maker. Repeated requests for an interview were agreed to but the scheduling of the interview was repeatedly delayed. To expedite the interview, discussion topics were forwarded, including policy tensions and alliances highlighted by other interviewees. This contributed to the scheduling of the interview. This experience demonstrated that interviewees were aware these discussions depicted not only their involvement within the policy process but that of their employing organisation. While participants at national level welcomed the opportunity to contribute, many used the opportunity to illustrate the current tensions within the national policy context. It is important to acknowledge the highly political agendas of policy elites. Their engagement can be a means to publicise their or their organisation's agenda. To overcome any propaganda, the preparation completed ensured the interviewer was credible in the eyes of the interviewee.

To highlight the relevance of the policy context, it was decided not to make this study or its participants anonymous. Interviewees were informed that their transcripts would be fully attributable in the final publication. This may have affected what participants disclosed, though this was not made explicit by any interviewee and participants did not appear overly guarded in their discussions. Admittedly, policy elites are skilled in concealing their responses but any unusual responses were generally exposed through triangulation with other data sources. Generally, there was correspondence between the processes outlined by different interviewees and the policy documents analysed. In a small number of instances, there was a disparity between the data sources. For example, analysis of the hostile interview outlined in Section 4.5.4 did not correspond with the data from other interview transcripts. Any minority perspectives were accordingly highlighted in Chapter 5. In accessing the interviewees, many were responsive to direct approaches. Participants from outside of UCD were generally more responsive through an introduction from another interviewee. This snowballing approach

helped initiate access, highlighting the networked nature of higher education and the importance of introductions when working with policy elites.

7.2.2.2 Research Site

UCD was the primary research site and my place of employment. Being an employee was of huge advantage, providing access and insights which would have required more time for any outside researcher to achieve. Six years of service had been completed before data collection commenced and this assisted with sensitising the researcher to seminal policy documents. The identification of these important documents was later triangulated with responses from the interviewees.

While the researcher worked with those interviewed at the School of Business, she was not directly known by those interviewed in other areas of the university. Researcher positionality is often written about but it was not until the fieldwork commenced at the School of Business that the complexity of this issue was realised. The altering perception, as both insider and outsider, changed frequently at different points in the same interview, making it difficult to classify my own perception of my role. Field diary notes remind one how the tone of interviewees altered with colleagues as soon as an interview commenced. La Gallais's continuum was a useful starting point to anticipate such scenarios and how to respond to them (See Table 4.1 and Section 7.3).

7.2.2.3 Phenomenology

This research is based upon policy documents and also interviewees' experience of a process. Thus, this thesis is based upon a phenomenological approach, drawing on interviewees' perceptions of events and is highly suitable for exploring the policy process and the third dimension of power in particular. On a small number of occasions, there was some discrepancy between experiences outlined by interviewees. (See Section 4.5.4). Despite these disagreements participants'

experiences were similar generally. However, even where there is a triangulated agreement amongst all participants, this presupposed that there is a single 'truth' to the description of this policy process. There might not be a single correct answer, e.g. the Registrar explained that modularisation arose as policy based on the teaching experiences of the Senior Management Team and as a legacy of Newman. In reality, there might have been multiple conscious or unconscious influences including the experience of UCD's President in the USA, the influence of other universities in UK and USA and/or the agenda set by the OECD or Bologna Process. There may well be multiple truths and there is no way to resolve this. A pragmatic understanding of how this modular policy was developed and implemented was achieved, while acknowledging the possibility of multiple other feasible ways of explaining why it developed as it did that way.

7.2.3 Empirical Contribution – Policy Contribution

This research contributes to the knowledge of the higher education policy process in Ireland. Irish higher education policy itself appears to be under-researched. Equally, the experience of small states and their institutions in the EU is an area of increasing scholarly interest. Review of the current behaviour of smaller states in the EU provides an insight into how other smaller states may interact in the future (Thorhallsson, 2000). From the results of this study, the Bologna Process is very important to UCD's staff. This study demonstrates the different levels of governance regarding the Bologna Process not as distinct spatial spaces of policy-making, but as a very fluid system of governance. What the discussants highlight regarding modularisation and its facilitation of the Bologna Process is a culturally significant occurrence in Europe. For example, the use of the word 'harmonisation' was frequently used in the study by participants and highlights how an attempt is being made to reconcile institutional and national differences to create a system of higher education policy objectives at national and European levels. This nuanced

role of the EU, through the European Commission and its funding of projects in this study cannot be discussed without reference to the wider European Project. Participants to this study reflect the debate regarding the European agenda and the inherent tensions regarding the preservation of national culture through their discussion of the institutional and national policy context.

Of note is the symbolism of universities contributing to the construction of a federal Europe, especially given the role of universities originally in social reform, i.e. as the sites of cultural change and creation for medieval policy and the 'Enlightenment' (Davies, 1996). While this research investigated modularisation and its relationship with the Bologna Process in UCD, it offers insights about the ambition to create a European identity across EU member states and the attempt to use universities to forge this identity. The paradox inherent in this is that the EU has no control over the field of education in the member states due to the principle of subsidiarity. Thus, the institutions that could help to create an European identity can only be mobilised from the bottom up. Despite a lack of policy authority over the member states or their institutions, it is notable that UCD implemented the Bologna Objectives in order to engage with the EHEA, demonstrating the influence of soft governance tools.

The selection of UCD as the main research site is very relevant, as historically, UCD was perceived as 'the' national university of Ireland (See Chapter 2). It was heavily involved in national movements in the past and was a dominant site for the scholarship of Irish history and language. Thus, UCD has a history symbolically central to Irish identity. This highlights a paradox as the national context was central to UCD's foundation and development. Yet, senior management perceived it was necessary to internationalise and break from national bonds, in order to achieve higher status as a university. What makes this study even more significant was that an institution at the heart of Irish national identity for over 150 years has

begun to disembed itself from its creating context. Only an institution secure in its national context could afford to disengage itself from its national location and to distinguish itself internationally. UCD's high status facilitated it disembedding from the weak state machinery.

Policy-makers within the institution had the autonomy to operate their own policy agenda on teaching and learning, before a national agenda was set. While this is true, they still attained the broad policy objectives regarding modularisation and the Bologna Process, these were perceived to be attained autonomously. Perhaps this is an illustration of Montesquieu's point that liberty is about recognising constraint and willingly accepting it (Montesquieu, 1989). UCD's engagement with the Bologna Process was presented by interviewees as inevitable and it appears particularly after 2004, when policy makers within UCD, willingly accepted its participation in this process.

7.3 Limitations

Some of the limitations of this study are related to the nature of qualitative analysis. Others are explicitly associated with the researcher's bias.

In researching this topic, it is not possible to refute the affect of researcher bias. A study of this nature reveals a set of normative predispositions, emanating from the researcher related with how society should be structured and by whom (Moyser and Wagstaffe, 1987). The researcher's biases contributed to the role of the researcher and their perceptions which formulate the study's ultimate findings. These biases question the validity of the interpretive results, although they motivated the researcher to be vigilant.

In this type of qualitative research, the researcher is pivotal to any understanding of the emergent knowledge. It is not possible to have 'epistemological innocence' as the researcher's values come to bear in the research approach. Inevitably my positionality affected this research. I endeavoured to reflect upon my positionality at each stage of the process, and especially during data collection. The use of La Gallais's continuum was helpful (see Table 4.1) but this framework skims the surface of insider research complexities. Researching one's own institution is acknowledged to be a difficult exercise. While this is a challenging undertaking, attempts have been made to complete the exercise in the most reflective fashion possible. Completing this research at the University of Edinburgh has helped with this objectivity: working with fellow Ed.D students and my supervisor helped this reflective process. The opportunity to explore this topic at a number of university seminars and colloquia presented the opportunity to discuss the topic outside of its context and to analyse the data with greater awareness of detachment.

Finally, there are some limitations to the study's sampling design. Accounts provided by each interviewee were considered to be equally valid. The approach of theoretical sampling was open to bias, regarding the selection of interviewees based on their involvement in the policy process by me and other interviewees. This selection started as a bottom-up process, commencing with UCD's policy process and then looking externally at policy agencies and individuals identified as influential. Due to the complexity of the policy process, it is possible that there may have been other important policy agents who were not highlighted as important by the interviewees. By relying to some extent on what or who interviewees perceived as important, this affected the study's findings. Due to the very nature of the Bologna Process, it was not possible to capture the impact of this process in a linear fashion.

7.4 Future Research

The dearth of research on this topic suggests that there is much scope for future research.

Predominantly, the study highlights the augmented influence of high status individuals in this process. A broader study might seek to also review if this is specific to the nature of Irish higher education or particular to the nature of other small corporatist states. Related to this is the role of the Everyday Maker in the policy process. Irish higher education appears to be a very informal policy context and merits further research into this role consequently. This study appears to support the theory decentred policy network, though further conceptual and empirical work is required to review Bourdieu's concepts, in light of this branch of policy network theory.

The Bologna Process was researched in the micro policy scape of UCD. As the Process draws to a close later in 2010, research is needed into its affects on institutional and national policy making in other states. Equally, the Bologna Process's use of soft governance tools in different contexts requires further review. This topic lends itself well to a comparative policy research approach in other institutions in Ireland and across the participating member states.

Some of the questions which might be addressed in future studies include:

- What was the impact of the Bologna Process on governance at other higher education institutions in Ireland?
- What is the role of the Everyday Maker in the policy process in Irish higher education institutions?

- Arising from the Universities Act 1997, what are the areas of convergence and divergences in teaching and learning policies across Irish universities and what are the soft governance tools used to achieve convergence?
- What is the impact of an agenda of internationalisation on the universities of smaller states in the European Union?

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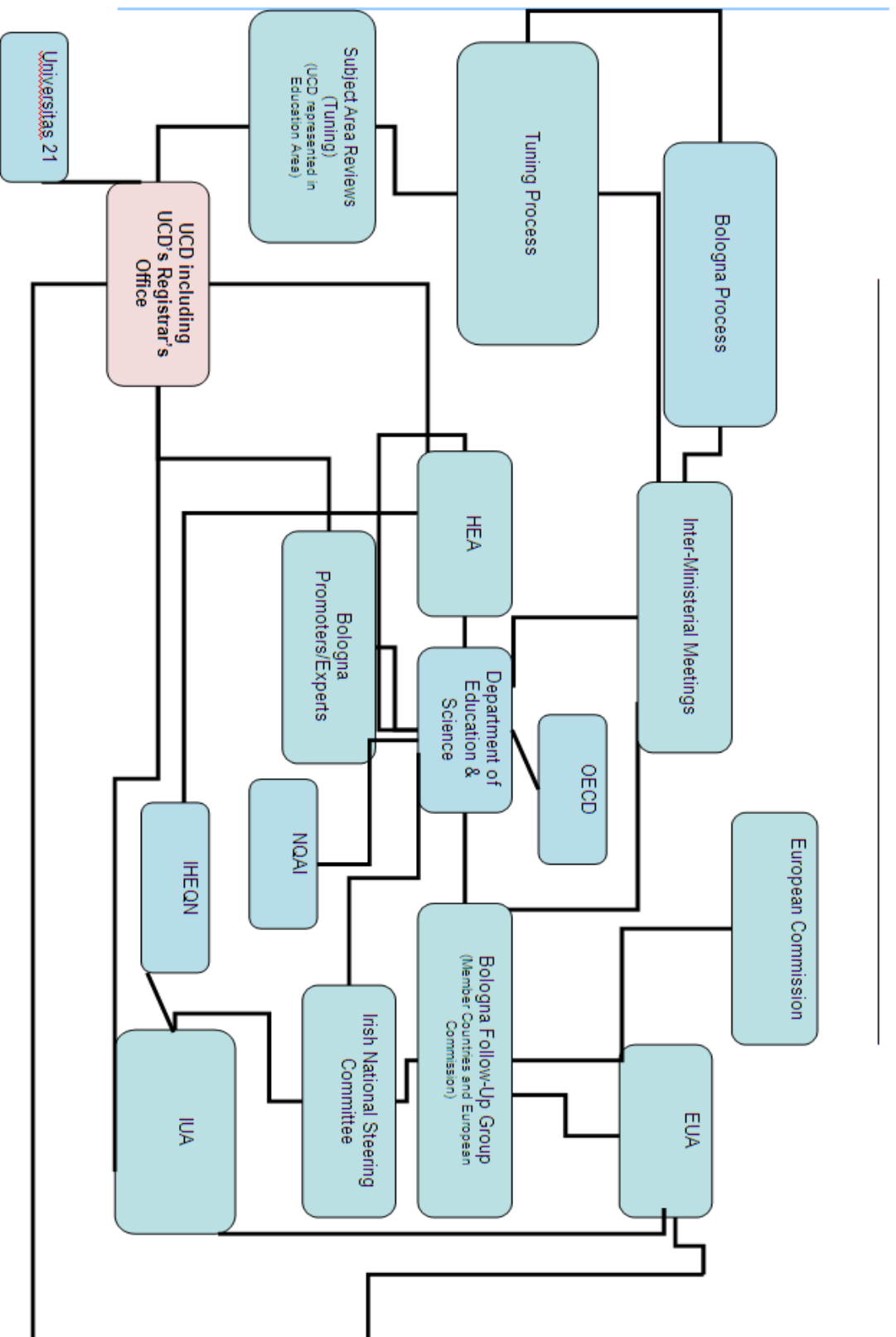
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Appendix One

Sociogram of Key Agents involved in Irish Higher Education



APPENDIX TWO

Timeline of Key Events

	Policy Activity	Description
1993/1994	National Convention on Education	National agreement to modularise curricula
1997	Universities Act enacted	Autonomy of universities in Ireland protected by legislation.
1999	Bologna Declaration signed	The Bologna Process is launched by the Ministers with responsibility for higher education in Europe.
2001	Skillbeck Report	Skillbeck report published on Irish higher education. Malcolm Skillbeck was a former Deputy Director for Education of the Directorate for Education at the OECD and conducted the review
2001	Prague Communiqué on Bologna Process released	
2001	EUA Institutional Review of UCD	Modularisation amongst a suite of recommendations.
2003	EUA Institutional Review of UCD	Modularisation amongst a suite of recommendations again.
2003	Berlin Communiqué on Bologna Process released	

2004	OECD Review of Higher Education Released	Report presented to DES 16 th September 2004
2004	Dr Hugh Brady appointed as President	President Brady appointed in January 2004 as a result of the first international competition for the post.
2004	Dr Philip Nolan appointed as Registrar	Dr Nolan was appointed in July 2004
2004	Washington Advisory Group invited to UCD to review organization	
2005	EUA Sectoral Review Commissioned by HEA and IUQB	Recommends modularisation
2005	Bergen Communique on the Bologna Process	
January 2005	UCD Strategic Plan disseminated	
2005	UCD commences institutional restructuring	
2005	Ministerial Speech 'Implementing the OECD Report' Strategic Innovation Fund	Modularisation a national priority from April 2005
September 2005	UCD's undergraduate modular curriculum goes live	
September 2006	UCD's postgraduate modular curriculum goes live	
September 2006	OECD 2006 Review of Higher Education	28 th September report published.
October 2009	UCD ranked 89 th in the THES/QS university rankings	

APPENDIX THREE

Sample of Coded Interview

Interviewee: Director of Academic Affairs, IUA
Location: 48 Merrion Square, Irish Universities Association, Dublin 2
Date: 27th November 2008 at 4pm

	Interview Content	Node Referred to
I.16	Yes. These were external reviews for quality assurance. They were built in. Well it was in response to the built in requirements of the Universities Act. It wasn't linked to anything in particular. It was just that it had been decided that these would take place and would be external.	Power One Dimensional Quality-Quality Assurance
Orna	And one of the key findings of that report from the EUA was certainly the need for UCD to modularise. That was strongly encouraged?	
I.16	I think the discussions were already under way in UCD. There was a new management team that had just come in and to be frank, the EUA had been asked to do institutional reviews at UCD in the past and the reports had been delivered and the reports had never really been made public. They sat in a drawer. And the new management team and found these reports and said 'Hang on'.	SMT EUA UCD_REG
Orna	Something is going on here.	
I.16	There were a series of recommendations made by external academic leaders six years previously and nothing has happened. They were still relevant. What are we doing? So, I am not sure that any of the 2004 recommendations were surprises but they may have added to the momentum that may have already been building up around the need to reform and other sorts of things.	EUA OECD Agenda-Setting
Orna	Is there any sense of why those reforms might not have happened? Was it not seen as a key priority? Was it an absence....	
I.16	Irish higher education had been just ticking along hunky dory. There didn't seem to be any impetus or real impetus for change. Students just kept pouring in, particularly into UCD. There were no major external shocks to the system. People thought at that stage that Bologna was all about Bachelors and Masters, which it was in some of the countries at that stage. But it is much more than that. And some of the other challenges, in UCD at any rate, had not been identified at all. Or if they had, they had been carefully pushed under the carpet or pushed to one side.	EUA Bologna Process UCD
Orna	So, then come 2004 and the new management team had come in with new set of priorities....	

I.16	A new management team came in with various different perspectives and came in with a very strong manifesto for change so to speak, a huge modernisation mission, which some people seemed to support and other people seemed to resist quite rapidly.	SMT Modernisation of universities
Orna	I suppose people don't like change even when there is a need for it. They get quite stagnant.	
I.16	No but whatever ones opinions, it quite clear from the 2004 reviews that UCD was performing way below its potential and students were, while they were getting along fine and their education was fine, it was highly compartmentalised. Engineering students were engineering students and didn't get much else and that was replicated across all of the areas or almost all areas. There was very little synergies between the different parts of the universities and very little in terms of university wide learning or policy sharing. .	Potential of University T&L
Orna	From your own sense then, it would have been possible that had another management team gone in, that UCD still could have resisted the opportunity to modularise, as has Trinity?	
I.16	Yes. Absolutely.	SMT
Orna	So, it was still very much internally driven. Although, there was external encouragement.	
I.16	I am not trying to compare it to Trinity at all. They are very different institutions and UCD made ...I am not sure they were on similar trajectories say in the five years proceeding 2004. The new UCD management team may have felt that unless UCD did something drastic, things couldn't stay the way they were and something had to be done and this was their analysis of what needed to be done. I don't think they waited for the EUA or the Washington Group or the various other people coming in, to tell them what they needed to do. I think they were sources of external back-up, therefore, for what they felt already needed to be done.	SMT Potential of University EUA WAG Standardisati on
Orna	From a policy perspective, would they have linked in with that stage, I know you would have been new in role then but would there have been a policy support role with the IUA in terms of some of the reforms like UCD Horizons because it was so closely linked to the Bologna reforms?	
I.16	We weren't intimately involved in them, in the planning or implementation but UCD certainly was looking for examples and was looking for, I wouldn't say guidance but, information about what else was going on. How it was working? What the learning had been in other institutions which had moved earlier? What could be done and how it could be done better really? They were certainly looking for that.	Standardisati on
Orna	I know X had....	
I.16	Yes. X was a particular model.	Other int. universities
Orna	Had they looked for that through the IUA?	
I.16	Yes and no. They didn't need the IUA to go and find X but they were asking me and other people in the IUA, you know, for information and data and other things. UCD wasn't alone in that area. They were moving particularly strongly at the time but other institutions had moved earlier and other ones had moved since. And some haven't.	IUA Other int. universities

Orna	And may not.	
I.16	UL is just this year doing a major reform, in fact introducing ECTS. It had a credit system but it was essentially, a US inspired credit system and they now have properly introduced ECTS now which has meant redesigning all of their modules and putting them in some sort of standardised format which means at least students can use them across faculty and schools, which they couldn't really before. They were modules but they couldn't really be used for much.	ECTS, USA, Standardisation, Other Irish HEI's
Orna	They weren't transferable.	
I.16	It wasn't really modularisation. They couldn't get the benefits of a university-wide supply of different things.	Modular
Orna	In terms of your sense at that stage, would there have been any external influences governing the policy process? I suppose that at the time, the Irish Higher Education Qualifications Network would have been set-up and I presume the HEA would also have been encouraging institutions to maybe not quite modularise but certainly to embrace the tenets of Bologna more strongly?	
I.16	To embrace Bologna yes but the HEA is and I am glad you are recording this, the HEA is a very strange animal.	HEA
Orna	You are not the first person to say that.	
I.16	It is supposed to advise the minister. I have no evidence that it does. It waits for the minister or the department to say what it wants and then it goes about trying to implement that.	Minister, HEA, DES,
Orna	Do you have a sense of their role? It is a funny one to try unpick. The Minister signed Bologna. They go to the meetings every two years. There seems to be the representatives from the department of education who attend those meetings. So, where does the HEA kick in at that stage?	
I.16	It doesn't. Not really with Bologna. It does to a certain extent, in that, there are bits of Bologna money that come from Brussels...	Bologna Funding
Orna	Like for the Bologna Promoters?	
I.16	Yes. HEA is the national agency that spends the money and has become better about consulting how to spend it. We insisted. So, it organises seminars and training events and that sort of stuff. At the time, I don't think the HEA was particularly inspiring for UCD in implementing those reforms. They were certainly talking to the HEA about them to make sure that the HEA wouldn't get on their high horse and object.	HEA, UCD, Informal Relationships, IUA
Orna	I think our strategic plan would go through them? Not for validation but it would be submitted to them.	
I.16	Yes. Of course. What we, the universities collectively, spend a long time doing was with the HEA was saying, 'We are all doing modularisation or we are all have got modularisation or we want modularisation. These are the benefits but therefore, you have said this is a good thing and you want us to do it and it is good for everybody. Therefore, you have to adapt. You have to change the way you fund us to suit this new model'. This new model...	HEA, Modular, Power One Dimensional, Agenda-Setting
Orna	The new RAM model?	

I.16	<p>Modularisation means students do not necessarily take 60 credits a year of whatever it is, Chemistry or Ancient History. It is much more complex than that and the funding model has to be much more flexible to respond to that. Otherwise, you know, it doesn't work. That was a slow process and it took quite a while for the HEA to understand what we meant but now it does that. So, the funding model effectively follows modules taken.</p>	<p>Modular, HEA, Bologna Funding,</p>
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APPENDIX FOUR

A typology of mechanism of external effects on national policies

Features of Effect Mechanism	Borrowing	Learning		Harmonisation	Dissemination	Standardisation	Installing Interdependence	Imposition
		Normal	Paradigmatic					
Nature of relationship	Voluntary	Voluntary	Formally voluntary	Formally voluntary	Formally voluntary	Formally voluntary	Voluntary	Compulsory
Explicitness of Process	Explicit	Varies	Varies	Explicit	Explicit	Quite explicit	Explicit	Explicit
Scope	Particular Policy Process	Recognised parameters/ policy process	Policy Process and policy goals	Multiple policies	Multiple policies	Multiple policies	Policy goals	Particular policy goals
Locus of viability	National	National	External	Regional organisation	External/national	International Fora	Common Heritage of Humankind	International Organisation
Process	Borrowing/ Imitation	'Learning'	'Teaching'	Collective Agreement	Persuasion/ Agenda Setting	Condition of Membership	Persuasion	Leverage
Parties Involved	Bilateral	Bilateral/international	International	Multinational	International	Multinational	Global 'Bottom up'	Multinational
Source of Initiation	Recipient	National Policy Community	International Model	Collectively by Members	Supranational	International Community	NGO's (Global Civil society)	Supranational Body
Dimension of Power	Conscious Decision	Conscious Decision	Agenda Setting/Rules of Games	Conscious Decision	Agenda Setting	Rules of Game	Agenda Setting	All Three dimensions
Nature of effect on education	Direct (on sector or organisation)	Varies	Varies	Implied – regime and sector	Direct-sector	Direct-regime sector relation	Indirect regime-direct organisation	Indirect regime
Example from education	Scotvec in New Zealand	Human Capital Theory in 1960's	Increasing user chances for Education	Maastricht Treat	OECD/CERI Activity	UNESCO Science Policy with UN	Green Curriculum Materials	World Bank Education Loans

(Dale, 1999:6)

APPENDIX FIVE

Sample of Consent Form and Information Sheets for Interviewees



RESEACH TOPIC
Doctoral Research

I am currently a third year doctoral student at the University of Edinburgh under the supervision of Professor Lindsay Paterson. I also work at University College Dublin as a Learning Support Officer at the School of Business. I am grateful to you for affording me the opportunity to meet with you regarding my thesis. Please find below a brief outline of the focus of this thesis.

The introduction of modularisation to UCD is of interest in reviewing European educational policy and its impact on national and local initiatives. The introduction of modularisation is an example of a major education policy driven by global entities as articulated by the EU and OECD. The adoption of this policy is in part driven by UCD's response to compete in a European and global educational arena. This study hopes to analysis the complex relationship and the dynamics of the coordination and governance methods used in the implementation of this policy at institutional level. This research hopes to analyse the local response to national and global education policy initiatives.

Please find below Professor Paterson's contact details, should you wish to contact him:

Phone: 0131 651 6357 /

Email: lindsay.paterson@ed.ac.uk

Should you wish to contact me before or after our meeting, my contact details are:

Phone: 00353 1 716 4818 / 00353 1 86 341314

Email: ornaobrien@gmail.com / orna.ryan@ucd.ie



PROVISION OF CONSENT

Doctoral Research – Orna Ryan

Name: _____

Date: _____

Location: _____

Signature: _____

Please tick the boxes as appropriate

I have been provided with an information sheet regarding the purposes of this research. []

I understand that I can withdraw from this interview at any point. []

I agree to participate in this research. []

I would like to see a transcript of the interview. []

I am happy for the findings of this research to be published in the final doctoral thesis. []

I am happy for the findings of this research to be used for academic publication. []

I am happy for my job title to be mentioned in the research. []

APPENDIX SIX

Overview of the Bologna Declaration

Overview of the Bologna Process

In June 1999, 29 European ministers in charge of higher education met in Bologna to lay the basis for establishing a European Higher Education Area by 2010 and promoting the European system of higher education world-wide. In the Bologna Declaration, the ministers affirmed their intention to:

1. adopt a system of easily readable and comparable degrees
2. adopt a system with two main cycles (undergraduate/graduate)
3. establish a system of credits (such as ECTS)
4. promote mobility by overcoming legal recognition and administrative obstacles
5. promote European co-operation in quality assurance
6. promote a European dimension in higher education

Two years later, the ministers in charge of higher education of 33 European signatory countries met in Prague in May 2001 and reaffirmed their commitment to the objectives of the Bologna Declaration. In the Prague Communiqué the ministers commented on the further process with regard to the different objectives of the Bologna Declaration and emphasised as important elements of the European Higher Education Area:

- inclusion of lifelong learning strategies
- involvement of higher education institutions and students as essential partners in the Process
- promotion of the attractiveness and competitiveness of the European Higher Education Area to other parts of the world (including the aspect of transnational education)

When ministers met again in Berlin in September 2003, they defined intermediate priorities for the next two years: quality assurance, the two-cycle degree system and recognition of degrees and periods of studies. In the Berlin Communiqué, specific goals were set for each of these action lines.

The two-cycle system

Ministers encouraged the Member States to elaborate a framework of comparable and compatible qualifications for their higher education systems and asked for the development of an overarching framework of qualifications for the European Higher Education Area. Within such frameworks, degrees should have different defined outcomes. First and second cycle degrees should have different orientations and various profiles in order to accommodate a diversity of individual, academic and labour market needs.

Recognition of degrees and periods of studies

Ministers set the objective that every student graduating as from 2005 should receive the Diploma Supplement automatically and free of charge.

The third cycle

Ministers also considered it necessary to go beyond the present focus on two main cycles of higher education to include the doctoral level as the third cycle in the Bologna Process and to promote closer links between the European Higher Education Area (EHEA) and the European Research Area (ERA). This added a tenth action line to the Bologna Process:

Ministers responsible for higher education in 40 European countries meet in Bergen on 19-20 May 2005 to assess the progress of the Bologna Process since the Berlin meeting in September 2003 and to set directions for the further development towards the European Higher Education Area to be realised by 2010.

Adapted from www.bologna.ie

APPENDIX SEVEN

Sample Interview Questions

These questions are based on the questions asked of staff member of UCD. Due to the nature of this study, different interviewees were asked about policy making in their respective context at local, institutional, national, international and global levels.

(1) UCD Strategic Plan 2005-8

- a. Describe the context of UCD's Strategy in 2005?
- b. What /who contributed to this strategy? Why?
 - i. Who was involved in the drafting of the plan?
 - ii. Was there a reform programme already envisaged? Who identified the priorities and how?
- c. How typical of Irish higher education institutions is UCD?
 - i. What is its self-perception?
 - ii. What is its reputation?
 - iii. Did this affect the policies it pursued?
- d. Internationalisation was a key policy of this plan?
 - i. Why was this case?
 - ii. What impact is this having?
 - iii. How did it effect your department / programmes?
- e. Where an external agencies influential?
 - i. Which ones?
 - ii. How?
- f. Modularisation was also a key component of this plan? If so, why?

(2) Modularisation

- a. What was this policy about?
- b. Where had it arisen?
- c. Why was it part of the UCD Strategic Plan?

- d. Why did it happen at this time? Could it have happened earlier/later?
- e. What/who was driving this policy?
- f. What impact did it have for your department /programmes?
- g. How was it implemented?
 - i. Who was involved in its implementation?
 - ii. Were there any difficulties?
 - iii. How were these resolved?
 - iv. Who was involved?
 - v. What would you do differently?

(3) Policy Process (General)

- a. Describe the policy process in UCD
- b. Who is involved?
- c. Is it a negotiated process? If so, by who?
- d. How typical would modularisation be of other university policies?
- e. What role is played by subject area? What role is played by the 'Centre'?
- f. Does this process relate to national policy for higher education?
 - i. If so, how?
 - ii. What are the national priorities?
 - iii. How are these articulated?
 - iv. How are they implemented?
- g. Any other comments you wish to make?

oOo

APPENDIX EIGHT

Participating Interviewees

Findings Identifier	Position	Organisation	Location of Interview	Length of Recorded Interview Transcripts	Extent of Follow-Up After Interview
I.1	Vice Principal for Teaching and Learning	UCD School of Business	UCD, Belfield, Dublin	38 mins	Transcript reviewed & email clarification
I.2	Registrar	Office of the Registrar, UCD	UCD, Belfield, Dublin	52 mins	n/a
I.3	Policy Advisor, Programme of Institutional Management in Higher Education	OECD	OECD, La Defence, Paris	48 mins	n/a
I.4	Director	UCD Centre for Teaching and Learning	UCD, Belfield, Dublin	57 mins	Transcript reviewed
I.5	Teaching Development Officer	UCD Centre for Teaching and Learning	UCD, Belfield, Dublin	98 mins	n/a
I.6	Director of Cesuga Programmes	School of Business	UCD, Belfield, Dublin	53 mins	n/a
I.7	Associate Director	UCD Quinn School of Business	UCD, Belfield, Dublin	58 mins	Transcript reviewed
I.8	Former Director of Academic Affairs	Academic Policy and Development Unit, UCD	UCD, Belfield, Dublin	54 mins	Transcript reviewed
I.9	Director of Internationalisation	UCD School of Business	UCD, Blackrock, Dublin	56 mins	n/a
I.10	Dean of UCD School of Business	UCD School of Business	UCD, Belfield, Dublin	58 mins	Transcript reviewed
I.11	Former Member of Senior Management Team	UCD School of Business	UCD, Belfield, Dublin	47 mins	Transcript reviewed
I.12	Advisor for Higher Education to the Minister for Education and Science (2004-5) & Attendee of Berlin Interministerial Conference	Department of Education and Science	Department of Education and Science, Marlborough St, Dublin 1	56 mins	Transcript reviewed and email clarification
I.13	Deputy Chief Executive Officer	Higher Education Authority	HEA, Shelbourne Road, Dublin	52 mins	n/a
I.14	Director	UCD Quinn School of Business	UCD, Belfield, Dublin	53 mins	n/a
I.15	CEO	Irish Universities Association	Merrion Square, Dublin	55 mins	n/a

Findings Identifier	Position	Organisation	Location of Interview		Extent of Follow-Up After Interview
I.16	Director of Academic Affairs	Irish Universities Association	Merrion Square, Dublin	65 mins	Transcript reviewed
I.17	Policy Officer 1	DG 10, European Commission	Place Madou, Brussels	58 mins	Transcript reviewed
I.18	Policy Adviser	European Universities Association	Rue d'Egmont, Brussels	63 mins	Email clarification
I.19	Policy Officer 2	DG 10, European Commission	Place Madou, Brussels	58 mins	Transcript reviewed
I.20	Director & OECD Consultant	Higher Education Research Unit,	Dublin Institute of Technology, Rathmines, Dublin	53 mins	Transcript reviewed
I.21	Head of Education Management & Infrastructure Division,	OECD	OECD, La Defence, Paris	68 mins	Transcript reviewed
I.22	Professor of Education and Irish Representative at Tuning Process	UCD School of Education	UCD, Belfield, Dublin	43 mins	Transcript Reviewed
I.23	Former Bologna Promoter and former Education Officer . Student Union of Ireland	n/a	Conducted via Skype	48 mins	Transcript Reviewed
I.24	Policy Advisor CERI	Centre for Educational Research and Innovation	OECD, La Defence, Paris	46 mins	n/a

APPENDIX NINE

Framework of policy documents arising from UCD Strategic Plan 2005-8

Note: Please note that not all documents listed below were analysed for this research. This table illustrated the relationship between influential policy documents. A listing of Primary Sources is available in Appendix Fifteen.

Level	Policy	Year Published	Producing Organisation	Mentioned by	Other policies cited
Institutional	UCD's Strategic Plan 2005-2008, Creating the Future <i>(This is my primary policy document)</i>	2005	University College Dublin		<u>Internal Reviews</u> British Academy, 2004, That full complement of riches The 4 th Report of the Expert Group on Future Skills Needs OECD, 2004, Review of National Policies for Education: Review of Education <u>External Reviews</u> European Universities Association (CRE/EUA) , 1998 and 2003, Washington Advisory Group,2004,.
European	Bologna Declaration	1999	E.C. for the Communities, European Union	UCD General Regulations on Modularisation and Semesterisation Guide to Alignment of Learning Outcomes and Assessment in the modular curriculum in UCD	Magna Chartum Universatum, 1988
Institutional	CRE Review of UCD	2003	CRE-Association of the	UCD Strategic Plan	CRE (now EUA) 2003 Bologna Declaration, E.C 1999.

			European Universities		for the Communities, European Union
Institutional	CRE Review of UCD (only available in hard copy)	1998	CRE-Association of the European Universities	UCD Strategic Plan	UNSECO-CRE study on Agendas for Change in HE in Europe for the 21 st Century (1997) World Bank 'Higher Education Relevance in the 21 st Century, 1998

Policies Documents Listed by Policy Documents cited in
UCD Strategic Plan 2005-8

Level	Policy	Year Published	Producing Organisation	Mentioned by	Other policies cited
European	Lisbon Declaration	2003	E.C. for the Communities, European Union	OECD, 2006	n/a
Institutional	UCD's Teaching and Learning Strategy 2007	2007	University College Dublin	n/a	Bologna Declaration, E.C. for the Communities, European Union, 1999
Institutional	Washington Advisory Group* Review into UCD (only available in hard copy)	2004	WAG	UCD Strategic Plan 2005-8	Academic Ranking of World Universities by Shanghai Jiao Tong University. OECD 2004 Review of National Policies for Education Ireland Creating and Sustaining the Innovation Society, HEA, 2002 Report Reinventing Undergraduate Education: A blueprint for America's Research universities., Carnegie Foundation, 1998 The Top American Universities, Florida University, 2002
National	Learning for Life: White Paper on Adult Education	2000	Department of Education and Science	OECD 2006	National Employment Action Plan ,2000 Programme for Prosperity and Fairness 2000 National Development Plan, 1999 OECD International Adult

					Literacy Survey (IALS, 1997)
					OECD, Education at a Glance, 2000
International	That Full Complement of Riches	2002	British Academy	UCD Strategic Plan 2005-8	<p>Department of Trade and Industry, Our Competitive Future, 1998</p> <p>State of Historic Environment, 2002</p> <p>THE UK Cultural Sector 1998</p> <p>Forecasting the Impact of Sustainability Issues on the Reputation of Large Multinational Corporations, Judge Institute of Management, 2003</p> <p>Raising our Game, by the Council for Excellence in Management and Leadership</p> <p>A Challenge for Government, Industry and the Academic Community, published by the British society for Middle Eastern Studies, June 2002</p> <p>The Value of Higher Education, CIHE, October 2003</p> <p>Blackwell A and Harvey L, Destinations and Reflections: careers of British art, craft and design graduates. Birmingham: University for Central England, 1999</p> <p>Education at a Glance, OECD, 2002</p> <p>Sir John Harvey Jones quoted in All Our Futures, Creativity, Culture and Education, National Advisory Council on Creative Education, 2000</p> <p>Belfield C R, Bullock A,</p>

					<p>Chevalier A N, Fielding A, Sibert W S and Thomas H R, Mapping the Careers of Highly Qualified Workers, HEFCE Research Series, University of Birmingham, 1997</p> <p>Faulkner W, Senker J and Velho L, Knowledge Frontiers: Public Sector Research and Industrial Innovation in Biotechnology, Engineering Ceramics and Parallel Computing, Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1995</p> <p>Bechhofer F, Rayman-Bacchus L and Williams R, The Dynamics of Social Science Research Exploitation</p>
National	Enterprise Strategy Group	2004	Enterprise Strategy Group	UCD Strategic Plan 2005-8	<p>Review of Industrial Performance and Policy, Department of Enterprise Trade and Employment, Government of Ireland, 2003</p> <p>White Paper on Industrial Policy, Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment and Government of Ireland, 1984</p> <p>UNCATD, World Investment Report, 2003</p> <p>International Monetary Fund, World Economic Outlook, 2004</p> <p>E.C., European Economy, No 2, 2004</p> <p>Expert Group on Future Skills, Impact on Demographics on the Future supply of Labour, 2003</p> <p>OECD, Programme for International Student Assessment, 2000</p> <p>OECD, Education at a Glance, 2003</p>

					<p>World Economic Forum, The Global Competitiveness Report 2003-4</p> <p>Department of Social and Family Affairs, National Action Plan Against Poverty and Social Exclusion, 2003-5</p> <p>NESC, Profit Sharing, Employee Share Ownership and Gain sharing: what can they achieve? Research Series Paper, No 4: May 2000</p> <p>E.C., Green Paper Entrepreneurship in Europe, COM (2003)</p> <p>ILO cited in Towards a Strategic Plan, Berglind Asgeirsdottir, Deputy Secretary General, OECD, 2003</p> <p>A Time for Change, 1992, Industrial Policy Review Group</p>
Supranational	Review of National Policies for Education: Review of Education in Ireland	2004	OECD	WAG 2004 Review of UCD	<p>DES: the National Development Plan, 2000</p> <p>FAS/ESRI, Forecasting Studies: Occupational Employment Forecasts by region, 2004</p> <p>IMHE/OECD, 2004, On the Edge: A sustainable future for Higher Education</p> <p>EU Progress towards the common objectives in education and training, CEC, 2004</p> <p>CHI, 2001, the future Funding of the Irish University Sector</p> <p>EU/Eurostat, 2003, Statistics on Science and Technology in Europe, 2001</p> <p>Bologna Declaration, E.C. for the Communities, European Union, 1999</p> <p>Supporting Equity in Higher Education, DES, 2003</p>

					<p>Higher Education in the Learning Society (Dearing Report), National Committee of Inquiry into Higher Education UK, 1997</p> <p>Higher Education Management Review (Hoare Report), Commonwealth of Australia, 1995</p> <p>The university challenged: A Review of International Trends and Issues with Particular Reference to Ireland, Skillbeck, 2001</p>
Supranational	Review of National Policies for Education Higher Education in Ireland	2006	Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development	n/a	<p>Lisbon Agenda, E.C., 2000</p> <p>National Development Plan 1999-2006, Government of Ireland</p> <p>Higher Education and the National Spatial Strategy, McDonagh Discussion Document Report, 2003</p> <p>Review of Departments Operations, Systems and Staffing Needs, Department of Education and Science, 2000</p> <p>On the Edge: A Sustainable Future for Higher Education, OECD and Institutional Management in Higher Education, 2004</p> <p>Higher Education Management Review (Hoare Report), Commonwealth of Australia, 1995</p> <p>The Financial Governance of Irish Universities: Balancing Autonomy and Accountability, HEA and CHIU, 2001</p> <p>Higher Education in the Learning Society (Dearing Report), National Committee of Inquiry into Higher Education UK, 1997</p>

					<p>Adult Education in an Era of Lifelong Learning, DES, 2000</p> <p>Learning for Life: White Paper on Adult Education, DES, 2000</p> <p>Beyond Rhetoric: Adult Learning Policies and Practices, 2003, OECD</p> <p>Co-Financing Lifelong Learning, 2004, OECD</p> <p>HEA Access and Equity in Higher Education: An International Perspective on Issues and Strategies, 2000,</p> <p>HEA Creating and Sustaining the Innovation Society, 2002,</p> <p>Creating Ireland's Innovation Society, Forfas and HEA, 2003</p> <p>The 4th Report of the Expert Group on Future Skills Needs, Forfas</p> <p>Creating Irelands' Knowledge Society: Proposals for Higher Education Reform, A submission by the HEA to the OECD Review of Higher Education, 2004, HEA</p> <p>Supporting Equity in Higher Education: A Report for Education and Science, DES, 2003</p>
Supranational	The Role of Universities in the Europe of Knowledge	2003	E.C. of the European Communities	OECD 2006	<p>Lisbon Agenda 2000</p> <p>E.C., Communications 'Towards a European research area', Com (2000) 6 of 18.1.2002 and the 'The European research area: providing new momentum', COM 565 of 16.10.2002</p> <p>E.C. Communication, 'More research for Europe/towards 3% of GDP', COM , 499 of 11.9.2002</p> <p>E.C., Communication, Making a European area of</p>

					<p>lifelong learning a reality', COM, (2001) 678 of 21.10.2001</p> <p>Statistics on Innovation in Europe, Data 1996-7, EUROSTAT</p> <p>E.C. ' Science and Society Action plan' COM 14 of 4.12.2001</p> <p>The eEurope Action Plan, Designing tomorrow's education, Communication from the Commission, COM 172 final, 28 March 2001</p>
Supranational	The university challenged: A Review of International Trends and Issues with Particular Reference to Ireland	2001	Written by Skillbeck for HEA and CHIU	OECD 2006	<p>Commission on the European Communities Memorandum on Higher Education in the European Community, Luxembourg, 1992</p> <p>Commission on the European Communities Memorandum on Higher Education in the European Community, Luxembourg, 1993</p> <p>Strategy for Action, Association of European Universities, 1995</p> <p>OECD, Redefining Tertiary Education, 1998</p> <p>OECD, Policies for higher Education 1974</p> <p>Harvard, ,General Education in a Free Society, 1945</p> <p>OECD, Education at a Glance, 2000</p> <p>OECD, Research- Training and Present, 1995</p> <p>OECD, From Higher Education to Employment, Synthesis Report, 1993</p> <p>The Council for Industry and Higher Education, 1996</p>

					<p>Commonwealth Higher Education Management Services, Benchmarking in higher Education, UNESCO 1998</p> <p>OECD universities under Scrutiny, 1987</p> <p>OECD,, Adults in Higher Education, 1987</p> <p>Conference of the Heads of Irish Universities (CHIU): The Future Needs of Higher Education in Ireland 1998</p> <p>Conference of Heads of Irish Universities (CHIU); Report on the Pilot Project, 1999</p> <p>Conference of Heads of Irish Universities (CHIU); Guaranteeing the Future, 2000</p> <p>Report of the Review Committee on post Secondary Education and Training Places, 1999</p> <p>Report of the Steering Group on the Future Development of Higher Education, 1995</p> <p>DES, White Paper on Adult Education 1996</p> <p>Ministry of Education, Finland Education, Training and Research in the Information Society. A National Strategy. Helsinki. The Ministry, 1995</p> <p>QAPHE, 1999</p> <p>Australian Department of Education Training and Youth Affairs, 1999, Higher Education- Report for the 1999-2001 Triennium</p> <p>Australian Department of Education Training and Youth Affairs, 1993, The Transition fro Elite to Mass</p>
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					<p>Higher Education</p> <p>European Pilot Project for Evaluating Quality in Higher Education, European Report, Brussels, Commission of the European Committee, 1997</p> <p>Higher Education Quality Council (HEQC) Graduate Standards Report. Final Report. Volume 1. The Report. London. Higher Education Quality Council, 1997</p> <p>Council of Europe: Higher Education and Research Committee Round the Table, Strasbourg, 1997</p> <p>OECD, 2000, Education at a Glance, OECD Indicators Education and Skills</p> <p>OECD/IMHE General conference, 2000</p> <p>Conference of the Heads of Irish Universities, 1998</p> <p>Commission on the Points System, 1999</p> <p>Committee on Higher Education 1993</p>
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*WAG are a private organisation which serves the science and technology advisory and institutional needs of US and foreign companies, universities, governments and non-governmental organisations.

APPENDIX TEN

Coding Manual

LISTING OF NODES FOR ANALYSIS

Category	Tree Node	Sub Node	Explanation	Frequency
1. Agents	European		Reference to each of the specific organisations referred to during data collection.	
		Council of Europe		2
		ENQA (European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education)		3
		Erasmus Programme		3
		Erasmus Students' Network		1
		'Europe'		12
		European Commission		10
		European Foundation for the Strategic Mgt of Unis		1
		European Presidency		6
		European Standards and Guidelines for Higher Education		6
		European Students Union		6
		European Teachers Association		1
		European Union		26
		Eurydice		1
		Experts (Use of)		4
		Interministerial Conference		29
		Lisbon Agenda		6
		ENIC – European Network of Information Centres in the European Region		1
		EUA (European University Association)		49
	Global		Reference to each of the specific organisations referred to during data collection.	
		OECD – Organisation for Economic Cooperation & Development		74
		OECD 2004 Review of Higher Education in Ireland		31
		World Bank		1

Category	Tree Node	Sub Node	Explanation	Frequency
		UNESCO – United Nations Education, Scientific and Cultural Organisation		7
	Institutional (UCD)		Reference to each of the specific organisations/agents referred to during data collection.	
		Faculty of Agriculture		3
		Heads of Department/Subject Areas		2
		IMS committee (Initiative on Modularisation and Semesterisation)		4
		Newman		3
		President		23
		UCD Reg (Central Administration UCD)		24
		Registrar		42
		Staff		11
		Stakeholders		5
		T&L Board (Teaching and Learning Board)		4
		UMPC – University Modular Programme Committee		8
		Working Group Exams		2
	Local		Reference to each of the specific agents at the School of Business referred to during data collection.	
		School of Business		35
		Director of Quinn School of Business		3
		Director of Smurfit School of Business		2
		Programme Board		38
		Programmes		8
		School Teaching and Learning Committee		2

Category	Tree Node	Sub Node	Explanation	Frequency
		Vice Principal for Teaching and Learning		5
		SMT (Senior Management Team, UCD)		19
	International Agents		Reference to each of the specific organisations referred to during data collection.	
		International Universities Association		2
		NARIC- National Academic Recognition Information Centres in the European Union		1
		WAG (Washington Advisory Group)		10
	National Agents		Reference to each of the national agencies/ specific organisations referred to during data collection.	
		'Civil Service '		12
		DES (Department of Education and Science)		54
		Enterprise Strategy Group		3
		Government (of Republic of Ireland)		45
		Other Irish HEI's		9
		HETAC (Higher Education and Training Awards Council)		8
		Higher Education Authority,		88
		Strategic Innovation Fund		25
		IFUT (Irish Federation of University Teachers)		1
		IHEQN (Irish Higher Education Quality Network)		3
		Irish Universities Association		21
		Irish Universities Quality Board		13

Category	Tree Node	Sub Node	Explanation	Frequency
		Minister (for Education and Science)		75
		NQAI (National Qualifications Authority of Ireland)		5
		NUI (National University of Ireland)		4
		TUI (Teachers Union of Ireland)		1
		USI (Union of Students in Ireland)		4
	Other countries		Reference to each of the specific countries referred to during data collection.	
		Australia		7
		Canada		2
		Scotland		1
		UK		39
		USA		6
		USA Higher education system		27
		Other int. universities - University of Edinburgh		6
	Other nation's agents		Reference to each of the specific organisations referred to during data collection.	
		Association of Advance Collegiate Schools of Business		1
		American Council on Education		1
		Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada		1
		British Academy		6
		CONAHEC (Consortium for North American Higher Education Collaboration)		2
		HEFCE (Higher Education Funding Council for England)		4
		Nordic Association of Universities		1
	Students		Reference to each of the specific students referred to during data collection.	17
	Bologna Process	Bologna Follow-up Group	Reference to Bologna –Follow-up Group	14
		Bologna Funding	Reference to the funding of the Bologna Process	9

Category	Tree Node	Sub Node	Explanation	Frequency
		Bologna Process	Reference to the actual Bologna Process	120
		Bologna Promoters or Experts	Reference to Bologna Promoters or Experts	22
		Bologna Working Group	Reference to the Bologna Working Group	1
		Diploma Supplement	Reference to the formulation or use of the Diploma Supplement	12
		Dublin Descriptors	Reference to the formulation or use of the Dublin Descriptors	4
		ECTS (European Credit Transfer System)	Reference to the formulation or use to ECTS	56
		European Higher Education Area (EHEA)	Reference to the formulation of the EHEA	3
		Interministerial Conference	Reference to the Interministerial Conferences (e.g. Berlin, Bergen, London, etc.)	29
		Learning Outcomes	Reference to the formulation or use of learning outcomes	18
		Mobility	Reference to the formulation or use or desire for student mobility	18
		Semesterisation	Reference to the formulation or use of semesterisation	15
		Tuning Process	Reference to the formulation to the Tuning Process	29
	Change	Demographics	Reference of current or future demographics	2
		National Qualifications Framework	Reference to change as a result of the National Qualifications Framework	25
		PISA	Reference to change as a result of PISA	3
		Potential of University	Reference to change as a result of the future potential of UCD	5
		Resistance	Reference to resistance of change	13
		Restructuring at UCD	Reference to change as a result of restructuring at UCD	12
		Strategy	Reference to change as a result of the UCD Strategic Plan	16
2. Comparison		Benchmark	Reference to comparison made on the basis of benchmarks	1
		Best Practice	Reference to comparison on the basis of best practice	9
		Classification	Reference to comparison on the basis of classification	1
		Comparison	Reference to comparison of institutions	38
		Competition	Reference to competition between institutions	36
		Peer Learning	Reference to peer learning	1
		PISA	Reference to comparison through PISA	3

Category	Tree Node	Sub Node	Explanation	Frequency
		World-Class Global	Reference to comparison with 'world class' or 'global' competitors	3
3. Discourses – Multiple		Discourses Multiple	Other evident discourses	2
		Diversity	Reference to a 'diversity' discourse	7
		Efficiency	Reference to a 'efficiency' discourse	4
		Flexibility	Reference to a 'flexibility' discourse	23
		Knowledge Economy	Reference to a 'knowledge economy' discourse	11
		Labour Market	Reference to a 'labour market' discourse	1
		Lifelong Learning	Reference to a 'lifelong learning' discourse	22
		Mobility	Reference to a 'mobility' discourse	11
		Part-time Students	Reference to a 'part-time students' discourse	15
		Quality - Quality Assurance	Reference to a 'quality' or 'quality assurance' discourse	63
		Service	Reference to a 'service' discourse	3
4. Examples of Policy – Making				
		Government Policy	Reference to policy making at governmental level	5
		Horizons	Reference to a policy making for 'Horizons'	26
		Inter-Inst Collaboration	Reference to a policy making for 'inter-institutional collaboration'	4
		Lisbon Agenda	Reference to a policy making for or from the 'Lisbon Agenda'	6
5. Funding-Financial		Funding	Reference to the funding of higher education	42
		Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE)	Reference to HEFCE	4
6. Irish Dimensions		Ireland	Reference to Ireland	37
		Irish Culture	Reference to Irish culture	4
		Irish Economy	Reference to the Irish economy	10
		Irish Higher Education	Reference to Irish higher education as a sector	21
		Irish Nation	Reference to the Irish nation	2
		Irish Society	Reference to Irish society	17
		Irish State	Reference to the Irish state	6
		National Convention on Education	Reference to the National Convention on Education	1
		National Development Plan	Reference to the National Development Plan	1
7.Modularisation		IMS Committee	Reference to the IMS Committee	2

Category	Tree Node	Sub Node	Explanation	Frequency
		Inter-Inst collaboration	Reference to the prospective of inter-institutional collaboration	4
		Modular	Reference to a modular framework	71
		Semesterisation	Reference to programme semesterisation	15
		Standardisation	Reference to standardisation	6
8. New Public Management		Audit	Reference to audit/audit culture	2
		Managerialism	Reference to managerialism	1
		Marketing University	Reference to the marketing of the university	12
		Modernisation of Universities	Reference to the modernisation of universities	16
		Performance Management	Reference to performance management	8
		Quality-Quality Assurance	Reference to quality/quality assurance	63
		Service	Reference to a service culture	3
		Standardisation	Reference to standardisation	6
		Students as consumers	Reference to students as consumers	2
		Technology	Reference to the use of technology	5
		Universities as corporate entities	Reference to universities as corporate entities	4
9. Policy Mechanisms		Borrowing /Imitation	Reference to evidence of policy borrowing/imitation	26
		Dissemination	Reference to evidence of policy dissemination	25
		Harmonisation	Reference to evidence of policy harmonisation	24
		Imposition	Reference to evidence of policy imposition	8
		Installing Interdependence	Reference to evidence of policy interdependence being instigated	18
		Learning-Teaching	Reference to evidence of policy learning and teaching	7
		Other Policy Mechanisms	Reference to policy mechanisms	8
		Probs with policy mechanism	Reference to problems with the policy mechanisms	2
		Standardisation_pol	Reference to evidence of policy standardisation	5
10. Policy Relationships		Committee	Reference to committee structures	1
		Confusion over policy or strategy or both	Reference to the confusion of participants over the policy process	7
		Formal Voluntary	Reference to formal voluntary policy relationships	2
		Informal relationships	Reference to informal policy relationships	10
		Networks	Reference to networks policy relationships	23

Category	Tree Node	Sub Node	Explanation	Frequency
		Policy Professionals (introduced for modularisation to UCD)	Reference to policy professionals	2
		Statutory relationship	Reference to statutory policy relationships	1
11. Policy Spatial Dimensions		Europeanisation	Reference to the Europeanisation of policy	3
		Global-Globalised-Globalisation	Reference to the globalisation of policy	13
		Government Policy	Reference to the Government (Irish) policy dimension	5
		Internationalisation	Reference to the Internationalisation policy dimension	23
		Local	Reference to the localisation of policy	5
12. Power		Agenda- Setting	Reference to the setting of agendas	59
		Autonomy	Reference to autonomy in governance or the policy process	35
		Autonomy of Universities	Reference to the autonomy of Irish universities	11
		Governance/ Conflict in Governance	Reference to existing or altered governance arrangement or conflict in the governance of the university or other organisations 7 references specifically to legislation	70
		Leadership in Governance	Reference to leadership in the governance of the university	1
		Power One Dimensional (Explicit Power) including legislation, e.g. Qualifications and Training Act 1999 and Universities Act 1997	Reference explicit power including Irish legislation	33
		Power Two Dimensional (Agenda-Setting)	Reference to evidence of agenda setting in the policy process	68
		Power Three Dimensional (Rules of the Game)	Reference to evidence of the 'rules of the game' in the policy process	12
		Power of the Organisation	Reference to the power of UCD	8
		Power through Personality	Reference to power or influenced exerted through personality	3
		Source of Legitimacy	Reference to perceived sources of legitimacy.	3
13. State		State	Reference to the State, as in the Irish state	3
14. UCD Teaching and Learning		Learning Outcomes	Reference to the introduction or use of learning outcomes	18
		Part-time Students	Reference to part-time students at undergraduate students.	14
		Semesterisation	Reference to the semestisation at UCD or as part Bologna Process	13

Category	Tree Node	Sub Node	Explanation	Frequency
		T&L Creativity	Reference to Creativity in Teaching and Learning as a result of UCD reforms	14
		Teaching and Learning	Reference to Teaching and Learning generally in UCD during and after UCD reforms	27
15. UCD		Emotions about Change at UCD	Reference to the emotions experienced by staff during reform	15
		Internationalising the university	Reference of the actual or desired internationalisation of UCD	57
		Strategy_UCD	Reference to the UCD Strategic Plan 2005-8	20
		UCD	Reference to UCD generally; its history, its past and its status.	28
		UCD re Ire Development	Reference to UCD in the context of Ireland's Development	14
		UCD_Image	Reference to the perceived or desired image of UCD	15

APPENDIX ELEVEN

Minister for Education and Science Address 25TH April 2005

<http://www.education.ie/robots/view.jsp?pcategory=10861&language=EN&ecategory=40276&link=link001&doc=27921>

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25 April, 2005 - 'Implementing the OECD Report' - Address by Mary Hanafin T.D, Minister for Education and Science, on the occasion of the launch of the European University Association 'Review of Quality Assurance in Irish Universities' Sectoral Report.

Introduction/ EUA Review of Quality Assurance

A chairde,

I am delighted to be here this afternoon for the launch of the report of the European University Association, Review of Quality Assurance in Irish Universities. I want to commend the Higher Education Authority and the Irish Universities Quality Board for jointly commissioning this work, which has provided an objective and very welcome appraisal of the developing quality assurance process in Irish universities.

The report's overall findings are highly encouraging. It confirms the seriousness of the approach of each of our universities to quality assurance and quality improvement. Indeed, the authors have concluded that the systematic organisation and promotion of quality assurance at the initiative of the universities themselves here is unparalleled in any other country in Europe or in the US or Canada. This is an emphatic endorsement of the principles of autonomy and ownership, balanced with accountability and public interest, which distinguish the Irish model.

I want to thank the European University Association panel of experts for their extremely lucid insights. The overall report and each of the individual university reports now provide some very instructive pointers for further developing the quality assurance process here. There are a number of very constructive and helpful recommendations, for example, in relation to the peer review process, the involvement of students and the need to link quality assurance outputs more closely to strategic management and the ongoing development of the universities, individually and collectively.

In launching the report today, I want to pay tribute to the wider academic body in each of our universities, who evidently recognise the fundamental importance of the quality of teaching and learning in their institutions. Their willingness to cooperate with and lead the development of the quality assurance process is a very positive indicator of the capacity of our universities to deliver the kind of programmes that the Irish student population and wider Irish society require.

I know that willingness is mirrored across the higher education system. The advanced work of the Irish Higher Education Quality Network in articulating principles of best practice in quality assurance is putting Ireland to the fore of European developments in the field.

Role of Higher Education

At a wider level, the capacity and quality of our higher education system has never been more important to Ireland's social, cultural and economic well-being. The core value of higher education – indeed the core value of the educational system as a whole – is to provide individuals with the opportunity for personal

development, fulfilment and improved quality of life. It is about building better communities and promoting a more coherent society. It is about improving our collective quality of life through advanced technologies, better health and more effective public policy making. It is about protecting our environment, enhancing our cultural awareness and appreciation, understanding our history, promoting tolerance and communication across ethnic and international boundaries. The education system as a whole must serve the needs and aspirations of each individual and must also promote the well-being and cohesion of the communities and societies – local, national and global – in which we live.

We rely on our higher education system to give us a lead across so many aspects of our daily lives. Ireland has now moved firmly into the post-industrial age. Knowledge, innovation, creativity and workforce skills are now the key success factors for Ireland's economic and social prosperity. This has thrust our higher education system into a central role, as the engine provider of the key national resources on which we depend.

I am also firmly convinced that opportunities and excellence in higher education are important not only for utilitarian purposes, but because education at its best enriches human understanding. Indeed, it is not too great an exaggeration to say that the search for that human understanding – be it in the arts or sciences – encapsulates what makes us human and enriches all of us. For several thousand years, Ireland has valued education and learning and we preserved much of Europe's cultural heritage when it was almost lost in the Dark Ages. It is fitting that we re-commit ourselves to excellence in the highest branches of learning at the beginning of the third millennium.

I want to use this occasion today to make some comments on the major policy issues relevant to the higher education system, as we seek to ensure that it develops the necessary capacity, structural and organisational capability to shoulder the immense responsibilities that it now carries.

OECD Report on Higher Education in Ireland

The Government has considered the OECD report on the future of higher education in Ireland and has endorsed the broad thrust of it. Of course there are some elements of the report where our approach differs somewhat and there are major issues of detail in relation to key recommendations that need to be worked through with the relevant partners over the coming weeks and months. I want, however, today to set out some of the main policy parameters that should now guide the process of change and development that lies ahead.

The Government recognises that our higher education system is central to a wide range of national social, economic and cultural objectives. It follows that strategy for the sector must be informed by the inputs of the relevant range of stakeholders.

The Government has endorsed the view that the current model of diversified institutional missions provides the best and most appropriate basis for moving forward. We do not want over twenty homogenous institutions competing in the same space. What we require is for each of our existing universities and institutes of technology to be supported in developing and enhancing their roles according to their existing strengths as part of a unified higher education system that aspires to world class standards.

The strengths on which we can build are considerable. We are developing excellence in research in a number of centres around the country. Ireland is bucking the European trend by attracting top international researchers from the US and elsewhere. Our institutes of technology have been a true success story of the Irish education system. They are driving the development of their regions. They are opening up access and progression opportunities in higher education. They are actively responding to the needs of industry for skills and for applied research. And they are forging key partnerships with our universities and with international higher education institutions for the advancement of Ireland's knowledge base.

The OECD has painted a blunt picture of the task facing us, if we are to build on our potential strengths and stay at the cutting edge of the knowledge revolution that is sweeping the developed world. Key structural reform is required in our arrangements for strategic objective setting, oversight and funding allocation for the sector. Reform of institutional governance, internal structures and systems, decision making processes and human resource policies, together with a quantum leap in overall investment, is called for. We have

stated our objective for Ireland's higher education system to be at the front-rank of performance within the OECD. We need a system-wide approach to achieve that. It is clear that the option of standing still is not on. I know from my discussions with many of you that the appetite is there to take on these challenges; we now need to pave a clear path forward.

Higher Education Legislation

A number of the key recommendations made by the OECD will require legislative change. It is my intention to develop comprehensive new legislation for the sector to give effect to these. The establishment of a new single oversight body to succeed the current Higher Education Authority will be addressed. So too will the need for change in the composition of Governing Bodies at institutional level. There is a need to place the two research councils, the Irish Research Council for the Humanities and Social Sciences and the Irish Research Council for Science, Engineering and Technology, on an appropriate statutory footing. Some of the legislative issues are complex and some are sensitive. I will take care to ensure that these are fully thought through.

Designation of Institutes of Technology

In the meantime, I want to move ahead with the designation of the Institutes of Technology under the existing Higher Education Authority without any further delay. This is a key step in developing a coherent strategic framework for the sector and in more effectively achieving the objectives for inter-institutional collaboration that are essential to maximising the strengths of the Irish system. Interim amending legislation will now be introduced to give effect to the designation. The aim is to have the interim legislation in place by the end of October of this year, with the designation to take effect from that time. The membership of the Authority itself will also be re-configured at that time to ensure that it reflects an appropriate balance of interests. Discussions between my Department, the institutions, the Higher Education Authority and other relevant parties, including staff interests, will now be intensified with a view to managing a smooth transfer of responsibilities within this time-frame.

Developing a National Strategy

A central responsibility of the current Authority and its successor body will be to achieve a broad collective fit between the institutional strategies of individual higher education providers and national strategic objectives. I will return to the question of how that fit can be achieved in a few moments.

An essential starting point has to be the identification of what those national economic, social and cultural objectives are. The OECD report has recommended the establishment of a National Council for Tertiary Education, Research and Innovation, to be chaired by An Taoiseach, for this purpose. I am not convinced that the particular model recommended by the OECD is the optimal one. However, there is a need to provide formal structures for an articulation of the broad cross-sectoral perspectives that should inform a national strategy for higher education. Those structures need to reflect the central importance of that strategy to Irish society. A re-constituted Higher Education Authority, representing a wider range of interests, and the recently established Cabinet Committee on Science, Technology and Innovation form important parts of the picture. It is my intention to further explore the potential approaches, consult further with colleagues and return to Government with proposals on the most effective overall model for achieving the objective behind the OECD recommendation.

National Priorities

In broad terms, some of the priorities that will guide any national strategy for higher education are likely to focus on

- the need for increased participation and improved access;
- the need to encourage a greater flexibility of course offerings to meet diverse student population needs in a lifelong learning context;
- the need to promote the quality of teaching and learning;

- the need to increase PhD numbers;
- the need for effective technology transfer; and
- the need to safeguard and re-enforce the many roles of higher education as a key driver of our economic development, in providing independent intellectual insights and in contributing to our broader social, human and cultural understanding.

We know that in gross numbers terms, demand for higher education in Ireland will continue to grow over the coming years. FAS and the ESRI have projected requirements for 300,000 skilled graduates in the period to 2010. The achievement of our objectives under the Lisbon Strategy demands significant further growth in research activity and a doubling of the number of PhD students by 2010.

We know too that our higher education institutions, despite significant progress, remain outside the realm of many in our society. I am a strong advocate of the view that the relationship between the human capital of a nation and its aspirations to success is symbiotic. The success of our economy is only worthwhile if it translates into a deeper growth in social cohesion and quality of life for all. The work being led by the National Office for Equity of Access to Higher Education is fundamental to enhancing the relevance of higher education to all of our communities and people.

Opportunities for lifelong learning are critical for promoting social inclusion, for personal opportunity and for surviving the demands of the modern workplace. Today's EUA report emphasises the need to complete the process of modularisation and, where it already exists, to make it as flexible as possible in helping to respond to the needs of non-traditional learners. If a culture of lifelong learning is to be embedded here, we need to meaningfully promote access and progression into and within higher education. There is a need to create multiple modes of access and a need for real inter-institutional co-operation to facilitate the movement of learners within the Irish system. We are making good progress on international recognition through the Bologna process and other initiatives. Nationally, however, we need to do more if the potential of the national framework of qualifications is to be fully realised for learners. It would be a sorry irony if overseas students were to find it easier to achieve recognition for prior learning here than students looking to move between two Irish institutions.

Funding Model

All of these issues represent major challenges for Irish society. The achievement of a broad collective fit between institutional strategies in higher education and these national objectives is a complex task. There is a need, as the OECD report has described it, to marry the benefits of institutional autonomy and self-reliance, competitiveness, distinctive branding, the ability to be entrepreneurial, and the maintenance of academic freedom with the requirement to contribute to national strategies and to meet the needs of public accountability.

Our current mechanisms will not be adequate to support that task. Neither a completely 'laissez-faire' approach or a highly interventionist model, both of which have advocates, can provide the right balance. There is a need for a more strategic relationship between the Government and the institutions that allows for a broad mediation of activity across the sector. The Higher Education Authority and its successor body will be the key broker in managing the operational mechanisms that will service that relationship. The development of institutional goals that contribute to system-wide support for national social, cultural and economic objectives needs to be directly promoted and rewarded.

The funding allocation mechanism is the most important instrument to achieve that in a context where institutional autonomy and academic freedom is respected. I support the recommendations of the OECD report in relation to the principles that should underpin the funding allocation model. My Department will work closely with the Higher Education Authority in advancing their current proposals for reforming the allocation mechanism, in partnership with the universities and institutes of technology.

Programme Approval/ Disciplinary Balance

There is a need too to consider the best means to mediate decisions on the provision of new programmes or

the development of new areas of activity, against a background of wider considerations around the need to build critical mass, take account of spatial development requirements, achieve appropriate disciplinary balance and make the most effective use of collective resources. The OECD report has made some procedural suggestions and there are some interesting models in operation internationally. There is a need for a robust, workable, Irish model that takes account of academic interests, the needs of individual learners and institutions and the wider system. I will be asking the Higher Education Authority to bring forward formal proposals on how they can best exercise this function.

Strategic Innovation Fund

The OECD report makes a number of recommendations on the need for internal capacity building within higher education institutions, if they are to deliver on the broad agenda faced. Re-organisation of faculties and departments, the introduction of new internal management and resource allocation processes, the development of new management information systems and administrative streamlining are some of the issues raised. This is already being reflected in change activities across a number of institutions.

The Government recognises the reform efforts required and underway. It has agreed that they should be promoted and supported through accelerated prime funding. I am delighted to announce today that the Government has now agreed to the establishment of a Strategic Innovation Fund for this purpose. The Strategic Innovation Fund will enable higher education institutions to :

- incentivise and reward internal restructuring and rationalisation efforts;
- provide for improved performance management systems;
- meet staff training and support requirements associated with the reform of structures and the implementation of new processes;
- implement improved management information systems;
- introduce teaching and learning reforms, including enhanced teaching methods, programme restructuring, modularisation and e-learning;
- support quality improvement initiatives aimed at excellence; and
- promote access, transfer and progression and incentivise stronger inter-institutional collaboration in the development and delivery of programmes.

It is intended that the fund will be competitively awarded on the basis of an independent external evaluation of the quality of proposals, with a requirement for excellence. This draws on the successful principles established for the awarding of funding under the Programme for Research in Third Level Institutions (PRTLTI). Where the PRTLTI supports the development of an infrastructure for excellence in research, this fund will support enhanced capacity in the core teaching and learning function. The fund will only be allocated to institutions to the extent that the proposals received meet the standard required and achieve the outcomes committed to.

The fund will be created on a multi-annual basis. Of course, in seeking additional funding, it will be necessary to be able to demonstrate the clear and real benefit that will derive from the proposals developed. I will now be asking the Higher Education Authority to immediately proceed with developing the detailed criteria and launching a competitive process for the approval of funding awards, with a view to the draw-down of awards commencing in 2006.

Physical Infrastructure and Human Resources

The development of physical infrastructure and human resources are essential elements of the capacity building process in the sector. The report identifies a range of human resource management issues around tenure, managing poor performance and retaining and rewarding excellent performers that need to be considered. A small working group of the relevant actors will be asked to consider and develop proposals on ways forward for dealing with these questions.

The Kelly Review of the capital requirements of third level institutions detailed a major programme of investment priorities over the next ten years. I have already set in train the process of implementing the Kelly report. I announced an end to the pause on capital spending within the sector last November and gave immediate approval for a number of the high priority projects identified in the report. I indicated that my announcement then should be regarded as a critical first step in dealing with the overall priorities identified in the report. My officials are currently considering how best to advance these within the multi-annual capital envelope for the education sector which provides for a mix of traditional and non-traditional approaches to public investment in the sector. There will be further announcements in this area in the coming weeks.

Research

I have already mentioned some of the key challenges in advancing Ireland's research performance. We need to significantly expand and enhance research opportunities here; we need to ensure that the quality of our research is internationally respected; and we need to yield the benefits of our research as part of a national innovation system. We have made important strides in the development of our national research architecture over recent years. The OECD report has made some recommendations on further structural change. The important challenge for us now, however, is to ensure that the structures that are already in place can effectively support our national goals. The establishment of the Cabinet Committee on Science, Technology and Innovation and the appointment of a Government Chief Science Adviser have been important advances in ensuring an overall coherence of approach across Government and between the research funding bodies.

The focus for the higher education system now needs to be on producing talented researchers in the numbers required and on providing an environment in which research excellence can flourish. The next cycle of PRTLTI will have a significant role in helping to bridge research performance to the targets set out in our national action plan. A key challenge moving forward will be to ensure the long-term sustainability of our research infrastructure. It is essential in this regard that research awards adequately reflect the cost of higher education system inputs.

The roles of our universities and institutes of technology in contributing to the full continuum of research activities, across the full range of disciplines, need to be viewed collectively as part of the overall national effort. Varying roles will be played by institutions within that. The PRTLTI has rightly enshrined the competitive principles that should underpin decisions relating to the allocation of research funding. It has also promoted inter-institutional collaboration on a new scale. As we continue to develop and expand research activities in higher education, the role of individual institutions, within collaborative partnerships, should evolve according to their proven strengths.

Overall Funding

In considering the implementation challenges ahead, the question of overall funding for the sector of course looms large in the picture. The OECD report identifies the need for a 'quantum leap' in funding and advocates a significant diversification of funding sources to achieve that.

Higher education systems internationally are dealing with similar issues of how to generate additional investment to support their knowledge objectives. Last week's European Commission Communication on the contribution of higher education to the Lisbon strategy spells out the challenges. In the absence of a re-introduction of student fees here, which I repeat today is off the agenda, the challenge is all the more acute. I have previously stated that higher education funding will be a priority for me moving forward. I have also pointed to the many competing demands on the exchequer that inevitably limit the ability of Government to make 'a quantum leap' in funding for any one sector, whatever its strategic importance.

Clearly there is a need for Government and the sector to work closely together in ensuring that the conditions for a greater diversification of funding are facilitated. As a matter of principle, I accept that income generated from external sources should not be subject to off-setting in the allocation of exchequer funding. The Government's report on the Internationalisation of Education Services recommends the development of a borrowing facility for higher education institutions wishing to develop facilities and market programmes for international students under the new 'Education Ireland' brand. There is a need to

look creatively at a range of other potential means of widening the funding base. I recognise that there are no easy solutions. However, we now need to actively pursue the possibilities. I will be asking the Higher Education Authority lead the development of proposals that can be brought back to Government on this front.

Conclusion/ Next Steps

The OECD report tells us that higher education in Ireland is at a crossroads. We are still at the crossroads, but have chosen our way forward. I am not afraid to stop and ask for directions along the way. I want to harness your energy and experience in delivering the higher education system that our economic, social and cultural achievements will be founded on.

There has been some significant discussion, formal and informal, around identifying the key areas where consensus can be built on the best way forward. There will be some further discussions as we now complete that round of consultation, including a planned colloquium on the recommendations relating to research. The main focus from today however will be action oriented. I have identified certain areas where specific actions are now proposed and others where more detailed proposals will be worked through and brought forward, with the contribution of all relevant inputs. It is my hope that the spirit of positive engagement that has been a feature of this process to date will endure.

I would like to conclude by once again thanking the EUA panel for their report which brings us here today. I want to thank the HEA and the IUQB also, who will bring those recommendations forward to the next stage. In reflecting on the challenge, I am reminded of the words of the American scientist and writer, William A. Foster:

“Quality is never an accident; it is always the result of high intention, sincere effort, intelligent direction and skilful execution; it represents the wise choice of many alternatives”.

The spirit of these words applies to our wider aspirations for reform and progress in higher education. We have expressed our high intention. All that is needed now is the sincere effort, intelligent direction and skilful execution.

Go raibh mile maith agaibh.

APPENDIX TWELVE

Ireland's Bologna Scorecard

BOLOGNA SCORECARD Ireland	
QUALITY ASSURANCE	
1. Stage of development of quality assurance system	
2. Key elements of evaluation systems	
3. Level of participation of students	
4. Level of international participation, co-operation and networking	
TWO-CYCLE DEGREE SYSTEM	
5. Stage of implementation of two-cycle system	
6. Level of student enrolment in two-cycle system	
7. Access from first cycle to second cycle	
RECOGNITION OF DEGREES AND PERIODS OF STUDY	
8. Stage of implementation of Diploma Supplement	
9. Ratification of Lisbon Recognition Convention	
10. Stage of implementation of ECTS	
TOTAL	

(Bologna Follow-Up Group, 2005: 83)

Explanation of Colour Codes used in Bologna Scorecard

Green	Excellent performance
Light Green	Very good performance
Yellow	Good performance
Orange	Some progress has been made
Red	Little Progress has been made yet

(Bologna Follow-up Group, 2005: 15)

APPENDIX THIRTEEN

Bologna Scorecard

Bologna Scorecard Summary

	Quality Assurance					2-cycle				Recognition				Total Score
	Development	Evaluation system	Participation of students	International participation	Score QA	Implementation	Student enrolment	Access	Score 2-cycle	Diploma Supplement	Lisbon Rec. Convention	ECTS	Score Recognition	
Albania														
Andorra														
Austria														
Belgium (Flemish Community)														
Belgium (French Community)														
Bosnia and Herzegovina														
Bulgaria														
Croatia														
Cyprus														
Czech Republic														
Denmark														
Estonia														
Finland														
France														
Germany														
Greece														
Holy See														
Hungary														
Iceland														
Ireland														

(Bologna Follow-Up Group, 2005: 40)

APPENDIX FOURTEEN

Summarised Biography of Participating Interviewees

Interviewee	Current Position	Relevant Previous International Experience
Vice Principal for Teaching and Learning	UCD School of Business	n/a
Registrar	Office of the Registrar, UCD	n/a
Director	Academic Policy and Development Unit, UCD	Napier University Edinburgh
Teaching Development Officer	UCD Centre for Teaching and Learning	Lecturer in Angela Ruskin University
Teaching Development Officer	UCD Centre for Teaching and Learning	n/a
Director	UCD Quinn School of Business	n/a
Associate Director	UCD School of Business	n/a
Director of Cesuga Programmes	UCD School of Business	n/a
Director of Internationalisation	UCD School of Business	n/a
Dean	School of Business	n/a
Former Vice-President & Member of Senior Management Team, Professor at UCD School of Business	UCD School of Business	Former Lecturer at Pennsylvania State and University of Pittsburgh
Assistant General Secretary and Former Adviser to the Minister of Education and Science	Department of Education, Higher Education	Former advisor to the Minister for Education and Science & Delegate at the Berlin 2003 Interministerial Conference
Deputy CEO	Higher Education Authority	n/a
Director	Higher Education Research Unit	Currently OECD Consultant
CEO	Irish Universities Association	Assistant Secretary General at the Department of Enterprise Trade and Employment
Director of Academic Affairs	Irish Universities Association	Policy Adviser at EUA. Currently involved with Trends reports

Interviewee	Current Position	Relevant Previous International Experience
Policy Officer 1	European Commission	Policy Adviser in the Netherlands
Policy Officer	European Universities Association	ESIB – The National Unions of Students in Europe (now ESU. National Union of Students in Flanders
Policy Officer 2	European Commission	EUA Policy Officer, Author of Trends Reports, project Team for 2003 Berlin Interministerial Conference
Head of Education Management & Infrastructure Division	OECD	Department of Education and Science, UK and University of Adelaide, South Australia
Policy Consultant	OECD	Quality Officer at French Agency for higher education quality control
Policy Officer with CERI at the OECD	OECD	n/a
Professor of Education	School of Education, UCD	Tuning Participant
Former Education Officer	USI	Former Bologna Promoter

APPENDIX FIFTEEN

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The sources listed here were analysed as part of this study, as outlined in Chapter Four.

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